

# **RESEARCH WITH CHILDREN UNDER THREE: THEIR RIGHTS TO PARTICIPATE IN PLANNING THE CURRICULUM IN EARLY YEARS' SETTINGS IN GREECE AND ENGLAND**

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## **Abstract**

This thesis poses a number of questions about research and pedagogy with young children under three, with a particular focus on the opportunities for children's 'voices' to be heard and for them to participate in the planning of the curriculum in early years' settings. The persistent division between education and care has been an issue in many European countries for a long time (OECD, 2006). The thesis reports on the findings of a research project in both England and Greece. The research aims were to consider how the meaning of children's participation is defined in the settings in the two countries; whether children use the resources provided according to adult expectation and initial planning and how practitioners react to children's choices by supporting, ignoring or disapproving them. The theoretical underpinning for the thesis is drawn particularly from the work of Rogoff and Corsaro. Research focused on six children in both England and Greece who were observed during their involvement in both adult directed and child initiated activities in the settings. An ethnographic approach together with a range of 'participatory' methods were used including data gathered through video recordings made by both children and adults.

This study has found that children express their perceptions during an activity in a very complicated way, elaborating and examining all the parameters that could place them in trouble. Additionally, the findings have shown that what the child is doing during an activity is not always what he is thinking, while many times children appeared to have their own agenda, thus ignoring or subverting adult plans. The main finding is that no matter what the differences and similarities in early years' education and care between the two countries are, there is an urgent need to promote the children's participatory rights, as adult's authority and power is generally taken for granted. This thesis argues for ethical tensions in research with young children and for balanced pedagogy where both adults' and children's voices influence the curriculum.

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**Abbreviations**

BNΣ OEE	Day Care Centre of the Organization of Labour Union in Greece
EPPE	Effective Provision of Pre-school Education
FEK (ΦΕΚ)	Greek Government Newspaper
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
TEI	Technological Educational Institute
IKA	Greek National Insurance System
EYEC	Early Years' Education and Care

# Chapter 1.

## Introduction

This thesis involves an ethnographic study focussing on young children aged 2.5 to 3 years old and their perceptions of the curriculum. The research took place in two countries; England and Greece and investigated children's right to actively contribute to changing and extending the activities in early years' settings. A range of recent international research and literature is critically discussed around children's rights in participating in decision making. In particular, the sociology of childhood and sociocultural theory present a coherent notion of children's competence and ability to actively decide, change and contribute to the decision making in the setting.

The methods used to collect data were observation (field notes and video film) and participant observation as part of ethnography with the use of a range of 'participatory' techniques such as the digital camera, tours, games, telephone discussion, and interviews with parents and practitioners. Hence, the techniques involve both those designed by the researcher herself and those introduced by children within the flow of the interaction. Analysis of findings led to a number of themes identified by children emerging from the data. These are critically considered in relation to the original research questions. Implications arising from the study for research with young children, including some important ethical tensions, are outlined in the conclusion.

### *Research with children*

Doing research with children over three years old has recently received a great deal of attention in childhood and educational research literature (see for example Clark and Moss, 2001, 2005; Emond, 2005; Cousins, 1999) and a number of issues have been identified as problematic (Waller, 2006; Waller and Bitou, 2011; Bitou and Waller, 2011; Conroy and Harcourt, 2009; Docket et al. 2009; Gallacher and Gallagher, 2008). However, conducting research with children under three years old is a topic that has not really appeared on the research agenda for those doing research in social sciences. Does this mean that the children under three years old are neglected or are they just protected too much? Hirschfeld, (2002) for example, poses the question: is it because the researcher 'doesn't like children'? While Gottlieb, (2000) wonders why babies and caregivers have disappeared from the social research field? Supporters of the new paradigm of the sociology of childhood (James et al., 1998; Qvortrup, 1994; Jenks, 1996; Corsaro, 2005a) together with the sociocultural theorists (Rogoff, 2003, Rogoff, 1998; Laver and Wenger,

1991) argue that the understanding of a child's development under the linear notion of developmental psychology has led to research *on* children rather than *with* children. However, as Hirschfeld (2002: 611) points out, in not doing research with children the researcher 'marginalizes the two things that children do especially well: children are strikingly adept at acquiring adult culture and, less obviously, adept at creating their own culture'.

Hence, this study concerns the topic of whether or not toddlers have the right to participate in the planning of activities in Early Years Education and Care (EYEC) in two European countries, Greece and England. The study will pose a significant question: If young children have the right to be involved in decision making for them, do they have the ability to do so? Are the general theories and discourses about children's competence and agency mostly about children over three years old and they are just theories without any practical applicability?

#### *An ethnographic study in Greece and England*

Several rational questions arise just reading the title of this thesis. Why England and Greece? Why children under three years old? Why participation? Why curriculum? The starting point was Greece simply because the author of this thesis comes from Greece and she is normally employed there as a 'pre-school' teacher (?). The term 'pre-school teacher' with a question mark stresses the existing confusion in the education and care of young people. Is that the correct term to define the occupation of those working with under threes in day care – 'pre-school' teacher, 'nursery nurse', 'carer', 'key worker', or just practitioner? It seems that the confusion arises from whether or not the early years' settings are under the auspice of the Ministry of Education or not. I argue in Chapter 2 that the fragmentation of the provision is creating confusion between whether or not the staff working there are teachers or just staff or carers or pedagogues.

England has been chosen because from the review of literature, it seems that until 1997, there was little official regulation and public provision for those children that are under three years old. However, in 1997, the 'New Labour' Government announced a set of reforms which included also the introduction of *Birth to Three Matters* (DfES 2002) and for the first time specified a curriculum framework exclusively for children under three years of age. The reform also included the establishment of the Sure Start centres. The later introduction of the *Early Years Foundation Stage* (EYFS) (DfES, 2007), is a coherent framework for children from birth to five years old, following on from the

acknowledgement of the significance of EYEC for the later life of children, together with the recognition that children have the right to participate in processes and decisions that affect their lives. In other words, the right to express their ‘voice’. Children’s views of their own childhood are therefore particularly significant. In the UK, *The Children Act* (1989) and *Every Child Matters* (DfES, 2004) established the right of the child to be listened to. The English case has many similarities with the Greek case regarding the lack of a framework until 1997, although the Greek case has been offering public provision for children from 8 months until 6 years old as part of the responsibility of the Ministry of Social Welfare since 1997.

The intention is therefore to investigate experience in the life of an early years’ setting with an official framework for children under 3 (England) and without a framework (Greece). The review of literature shows that a considerable number of studies have been conducted in EYEC comparing provisions (OECD, 2001, 2006), policies (Cohen, Moss, Pertie and Wallace, 2004), training and provision (Oberhuemer and Ulich, 1997), adult’s beliefs (Cameron, 2007; Alvestad and Duncan, 2006; Alvestad and Pramling-Samuelsson, 1999; Tobin, Kasawa and Hsueh, 2004; Tobin, 1995, 2005; Tobin, Wu and Davidson, 1989), curricula (Alvestad and Duncan, 2006; Alvestad and Pramling-Samuelsson, 1999; Pramling-Samuelsson, Sheridan and Williams, 2006), and pedagogy in primary education (Alexander, 2001). What is missing however, is the recognition of the child’s perception. In all these studies the child’s perspective has not been captured. As Alexander (2001) states, there is a tendency of focusing on the education and culture of our own countries rather than on others. Although there is a general trend of doing research with young children investigating their experience in EYEC, the studies do not move beyond the borders. Children’s perceptions in one country are not compared with those of other’s as is happening with adult’s perceptions and policies. However, Rogoff (2003) has argued that in order to understand our culture, we have also to see the culture of others, seeing similarities and differences, interrogating normalities and appreciating customs and practices.

As Alexander (2001) suggests, the lack of comparative studies, for instance, in pedagogy (beliefs and values) is associated with problems in accessing, cost, language, time and methodology. Especially today in the new era of globalisation, comparing beliefs and approaches are particularly important:

‘We necessarily and constantly compare in order to make choices and to judge where we stand in relation to others and to our own past. In the more specific context of education it is important to distinguish the comparing, importing and exporting of ideas, which is an activity intrinsic to educational development, from the task of attempting to devise rules and procedures for doing so in a systematic way’.

(Alexander, 2001: 26)

Being both an adult and a pre-school teacher it is important to reflect on how often we interrogate our own principles and values in relation with those of children. As Rogoff (2003) notes, in contrasting cultures there is always the danger (Miller, 2008) of predominant unquestioned cultures such as adult’s culture versus peer culture, researchers’ culture versus participants’ culture. Additionally, it is important to understand the multifaceted character of the culture. The culture and the individual should not be seen as a separate entity but as part of the “spider web” (Corsaro, 2005a: 24) fitting and connected (Rogoff, 2003:11) as “cells” (Wenger et al, 2002: 125) to the broader community. As such community and individuals are changing together, while variation and differentiation are inevitable.

### *Motivation, Aims and Research questions*

Initially, when reflecting on a proposed study involving children’s perceptions, as demanded in ethnographic research (Corsaro, 2003, 2005a; Emerson, Fretz and Shaw, 2007; Emond, 2005) I found myself puzzling about why I chose to investigate toddlers’ participation in planned and unplanned activities. Why these two terms are so connected and correlated in my mind is due to my experience with toddlers in EYEC. Searching for possible meanings I found that the notion of participation affords a new understanding of how the child is acknowledged within society in relation to their rights and learning abilities. Alternatively, the meaning of curriculum – or better the activities of focus, may show whether or not and how the child contributes to the daily practices.

### *Participation*

One of the longstanding debates over provision for children under three years old is whether or not they are best able to learn in the early years’ setting, or at home (Sims, 2003; Leach, 1997; Elfer, 2007). Sims (2003) wonders if this is the right question or if we should move beyond this and see all the other factors that influence young children’s lives in early years’ settings such as family background (i.e. working mother), low staff salaries, high rates of staff turnover, lack of continuous training, and often poor working conditions.



As a pre-school teacher, I had regularly experienced a serious debate between the staff about ‘who is going to work with under threes?’, at the beginning of the new academic year. There was a general notion of ‘you cannot do anything with this group of children, they are boring’. Sims (2003) argues that it is the way we think about the children and not the children themselves that determines their ability in doing things, thus recommending a holistic model of services where parents, day care and community work as a whole are considered. However, as a pre-school teacher, I always followed the direction of my main initial education (TEI) but practically, especially when I was working with children under three years old, children regularly declined to do things. What I expected children to do was different from what they were doing. I found myself with a box full of candies trying to treat children to acquired skills and habits, trying to help them to learn according to my expectations. The result was my going home ‘feeling guilty’ because I was pushing children to do things and the children were ‘tired and upset’.

It was then Lave and Wenger’s (1991) acknowledgement that individual’s learning is an inevitable process which takes place through participation that gave me a starting point to answer my question. Learning, they argue, is not only a matter of discovery, transmission of knowledge or interaction (as I was doing) but it is something more than this linear description. It is the peripheral participation that takes place at any time, but we as practitioners have never been taught about that in our initial training and studies.

Learning is not a hierarchical concept but a horizontal one where everybody is learning from each other (Rogoff, 2003). An extension of peripheral participation is that of ‘intent participation’ as described by Rogoff, Paradise, Mejia Arauz, Correa-Chavez and Angelillo (2003). The word ‘intent’ itself shows the dynamic of the child’s desire to contribute to the ‘mature activities’ (see below) but it seems that this process is sometimes blocked by the adult or unpredictable factors. What I have understood through my reading is that the meaning of intention is the meaning of desire, competence and not ignorance and arrogance in relation to practice. However what I received from the toddlers in the period I was working in the Greek day care centre was the lack of intention to participate in my own activities and myself on the other hand forcing them to do so. As such, this study will examine a child’s intention to do things in association with an adult’s intention and expectations. Was my expectation too demanding or was the child’s interest different?

### *Curriculum*

Curriculum is embellished by values, principles and practices. ‘Activities’ refers to both ‘mature’ and ‘child focused’ activities. The meaning of ‘mature activity’ is a term adopted by Rogoff (2003: 8) and it refers to the ‘full range of activities’ within a community that recently children have been excluded from, due to industrialisation and ‘schoolification’. Children’s recent placement in an educational institution from early years’ settings until compulsory schooling is tempting to be seen mainly as a preparation for later entrance into the adult (work) community. In these institutions there is a clear demand for a child to be trained and gain specific skills, such as reading writing and counting, that are seen as important for later adult life. Those child-focused activities that are applied by the educational institutions are strongly interrelated with an age segregated notion of learning and offer few opportunities for learning by observing adults’ mature activities. On the whole, Rogoff (2003) argues that today the child, once it is born, is segregated and kept distant from what adults are doing. This kind of segregation, according to Rogoff, shows a hierarchical organisation of child’s lives with adults exercising sustained control upon young people.

It should be clarified here that ‘curriculum’ could be understood as any official document that is used in early years’ settings in each country, no matter if it is called curriculum or framework or regulation. However, it is strongly argued that practices and activities directed and not directed by adults also consist of a curriculum inherited of goals (children’s, practitioner’s, parent’s, and society’s), values, practices, policies, histories, expectations and outcomes (Hujala, 2002; Bennett, 2005) and as such should be seen not as a narrow meaning but as a broader notion. As Lave and Wenger (1991: 97) state, there is the ‘learning curriculum’ and the ‘teaching curriculum’. Therefore, attention will be paid to both meanings seeking possible contradictions between what is chosen by the children and what is organised by the practitioners. Hence, the main aim is to see how children’s participation is perceived in practice, how the child experiences these practices and how they clarify these perspectives in ongoing situations (does the child contribute, just withdraw, or follow instructions?).

### *Outline of the thesis*

Overall the structure of the thesis begins with the Review of Literature (Chapter 2). Firstly the segregation between education and care is critically considered and how such a division influences the policy, provision and life of those who are involved in the EYEC of

young people is examined. It will be argued that it is urgent for children's, parents' and practitioners' well being for Governments to move beyond the contradiction between education and care and look for a coherent provision for all children who attend public educational institutions. Seeing the problem of the distinction between education and care, a phenomenon that has been found not only in Greece and England but also across Europe, Australia and New Zealand, I shall argue that the persistent gap between the two terms influences the existence, or not, of a curriculum and reforms for children under three years old. I then give a short overview of the policies and provision in Greece and England because what is happening outside EYEC influences the lives of children, parents and practitioners (Moss and Petrie, 2002, Dahlberg, Moss and Pence, 2007, Alexander, 2001, Corsaro, 2000, 2005a).

In the second section the meaning of agency through the lens of Sociology of Childhood will be discussed, with particular emphasis on Corsaro's (2005a) theory considering in more depth whether or not children under three years old are able to express their perception in relation to the activities. The third section looks into the meaning of participation as a right and as learning. Possible pitfalls and dangers will be critically considered. The final section of the literature review will analyse recent international literature to see how the child, especially the toddler, is determined as 'competent' in the research undertaken in EYEC.

The third Chapter describes the methodology that has been adopted for the aims and the needs of the study. Ethnography and 'participatory' methods have been used. Ethics and challenges for the design of the study will be discussed in depth, including reflection on how the methods of the initial design were changed. The Chapter concludes with a description of how the analysis of data has been undertaken. The analysis of visual methods has been based on Rogoff's three level of analysis (Personal, Interpersonal, and Cultural).

The fourth Chapter is the heart of the study, presenting the findings and the analysis of them. This section is organised around themes based on issues raised exclusively by children themselves. The fifth Chapter focuses on those issues that have arisen in each country respectively and described in the previous chapter. Based on sociocultural interpretation (Rogoff, 2003; Rogoff et al. 2003; Rogoff, 1998) similarities and differences will be found and those factors which may determine a child's perception and seeing them in association with the research questions which are as follows:

1. What are children's perspectives of the planned activities in early years' settings (under 3 years old)?
2. When practitioners set up a framework of activities for children under three years old, how are children consulted?
3. How are children under three years old competent and able to express their desires during the planning of activities?

The main findings are that the children's way of describing their perception is more complicated than was expected and initially, leading to an analysis that challenges the adult's points of view. Quite often, misunderstandings and distance between 'why' the child is doing an activity and 'what' the child is doing puts obstacles in the way of children and adults sharing meaning. The Greek child appears to have a clearer perception of what the curriculum is and the day care centre means. The differences between the children in the two countries have been interrelated with many factors such as family background, structure of the programme, researcher's role, principles, programme standards, practitioner's roles and tactics.

Significant differences have been found between the two centres in the way the meaning of participation has been received. For the Greek practitioners the child's duty is to participate in an activity as long as it is organised and planned by an adult, otherwise the child can choose to play 'freely' while the adult does not intervene as long as the child 'does not create any fuss'. The planning is based on the adult's goals and aims exclusively. For the English practitioners, participation is defined as a choice for the child to be involved in one of the organised activities that are designed based on the observation of the previous session. The influence of the EYFS (DfES, 2007) has been significantly found, however, on many occasions how the observation took place and applied to the next programme was found to be problematic. Furthermore, the children were found to challenge the programme by avoiding involvement in the planned areas. The participants of the study in both countries showed both their desire and tension to change, contribute and extend the programme. However, the Greek children are forced to follow adults' instructions and as such develop strategies similar to those that have been described by Corsaro (2003, 2005a) as 'secondary adjustment'. Conversely, the English children show significant creativity in relation to the utility of the materials and resources provided. However, there are also cases when the children decide to withdraw from the organised activities and follow their own agenda which is not always captured by the practitioners.

The concluding part of the thesis describes the implications of the study for pedagogy in relation to two issues: ‘misunderstandings of children’s languages’ and ‘participation as a ‘choice’, recommending possible changes that will help pedagogues to work by ‘seeing’ and ‘understanding’ children’s actions and reactions, thus identifying the urgent need for significant reforms in the Greek day care centres.

## Chapter 2.

### Review of Literature

#### Introduction

This chapter critically discusses a number of issues related to early years' education and care for children under three years old. It starts with a short description of the provision, policy and curriculum in Greece and England and the segregation between education and care is discussed. Two theoretical models will be examined: the sociology of childhood together with sociocultural theory. The meaning of agency and the notion of a 'competent' child will be examined while emphasis will be given to the meaning of participation as a right to learning.

#### 2.1 Education and Care for children under three years old

##### *2.1.1 The Greek Case*

Currently in Greece there segregation still exist between education and care which is reflected by the lack of any kind of curriculum or framework for those children who are in day care centres (8 months to 6 years old), while the kindergartens (4 -6 years old) share a common curriculum with primary education (MoE, 2002). Today, even though Greek kindergartens have a new curriculum (FEK 1376, 18-10-01), nobody has officially informed the Day Care Centres about these changes (at least in education for the over three's) a factor indicating the automatic exclusion of day care from the educational domain.

The first FEK (FEK 721148/28-5-1937: official Greek documents related to the regulation of the daycare centres) was published in 1937. This policy was clearly for poor children and working parents. However, the present document entitled the head teachers of the primary schools to have the pedagogical responsibility of the nursery schools due to their educational background. The second FEK (Decision.Γ2α/οικ.4108/88, ΦΕΚ 546/88 τ.Β: 4) published in 1988 specified the purpose of the Day Care Centres as follows:

‘The aims of the Public Day Care Centres are the daily nutrition, education and entertainment of infant and toddlers, who cannot receive from their family the appropriate care because their parents are employed or for other social reasons’.

(Decision.Γ2α/οικ.4108/88, ΦΕΚ 546/88 τ.Β: 4 )

For the day care centres of the OEE, the first FEK was published in 1986 (FEK/volume B number 50461) and since that time, only a hand written document has been sent to the centres to illuminate some parts of the 1986 document in association with staff duties in 1994. The latest FEK was published 22/04/2002 after the reform that defined the transformation of Day Care Centres from the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare to the Ministry of Interior and more specifically to the municipalities. What is significant about this document is the recognition of the pedagogical role of the Day Care Centres asking for the staff to use contemporary theories but without giving further details. However, a strong characteristic of all these documents is that they are orientated towards a clear description of the daily programme according to an adult's predetermined activities such as meals, toilet, sleep, etc (Rockel, 2009).

Previously, with the FEK 637/30-07-97 the Greek Government had decided to transfer the responsibility of those centres from the Ministry of Social Welfare to the Ministry of Interior thus giving the full responsibility to the local authorities, funding the setting through the municipal annual budgets and not directly from central government and letting the local authorities decide the opening hours and programme according to the local needs. The last reform does not mention which Ministry is responsible for establishing and assuring the quality of the pedagogical role of these settings.

Gogas (2001) describes a pendulum in the purpose of EYEC in Greece; a pendulum which follows, as a magnet does, the changes of other Western countries. Hence, the focus is initially only on care whilst at other times the emphasis is on the education of young people and a preparatory role for primary school. The roots of this confusion have been found in the 19<sup>th</sup> century in the industrialised countries of West Europe in connection with the need for cheap labour and women's involvement in the labour market (Gogas, 2001). As he states, this last tendency demanded children to give up school from an early age to support the family income.

Additionally, in the Greek case there was one more factor, it was urgent for the Greek ethnos (related to the meaning of ethnicity - Alathiotis and Karatzia-Stavlioti, 2006; Koustourakis, 2007) to maintain and cultivate the national identity through the Greek orthodox ideology, so as to create a homogeneous popularity with one common national identity, religion and language (Stamelos, 1999; Gotovos, 1996; Papakonstantinou, 1996; Fragoudaki and Dragonas, 1997; Bouzakis, 2000; Koustourakis, 2007; Alathiotis and

Karatzia-Stavlioti, 2006). That reality, in connection with the need for cheap labour, made the teachers try to teach children as much 'knowledge' as they could in order to cover the entire didactic lessons (Gogas, 2001). Further, the majority of those who used to work with these children were not appropriately educated. Thus, they thought that the best thing that they could offer to children was to prepare them for the discipline of the primary school (Gogas, 2001); this adherence to the programmes was strictly applied, not only in the day care centres but also in the whole educational system (Papakonstantinou, 1996). Gogas (2001) argues that although the Greek society has never been industrialised, early years' education and care has never had its own model. This fact in connection with the lack of a real public welfare system leads to the construction of many and different institutions without, a clear purpose. Hence, the provision at the moment is divided as follows:

- Kindergarten (4-6 years old, Ministry of Education),
- Municipal nursery schools (8 months to 4 years old). Recently (N. 3518/06, ΦΕΚ 272/06 τ. Α') has transferred the responsibility of children from 4 to 6 years old exclusively to kindergartens as part of compulsory education.
- Public Nursery schools (8 months to 4 years old) running from public sectors such as OEE, hospitals, army, church.
- Private nursery schools.

Koustourakis (2007), with Alahiotis and Karatzia-Stavlioti (2006), states that the existence of more humanitarian values in the Greek educational system could be correlated with the involvement of the church and the constitution of many national problems in association with the Greek-Turkish crisis in Aegean Sea and the name of Macedonia. However, it could be argued that issues like this led to the Greek Government seeking national security by joining the European Union in 1981 (Koustourakis, 2007). Such a movement inevitably changed the ideology and the purposes of the Greek educational system, obligated to follow the same rules of the other European Countries (Alahiotis and Karatzia-Stavlioti, 2006; Koutsourakis, 2007). Hence Greece, at the same time as many other European countries (1997/1998), announced a range of reforms in all compulsory education. As Alahiotis and Karatzia-Stavlioti state (2006: 125) 'it was then the basic demands of the welfare state for equity, social justice and free access to education that seemed to gradually be replaced by demands for a high-quality education that would satisfy the needs of a competitive Greek economy'.



### 2.1.2 The Case of England

The case of England presents a more fragmented and complicated system of EYEC than the Greek case, particularly for children over three in relation to problems of affordability (Jackson, 2004; OECD, 2000, Bertram and Pascal, 2000; Cohen et al, 2004; Penn and Randall, 2005; Penn, 2007; Pugh, 2010). By 1998 EYEC for children under three was also clearly under the private domain (Langston and Abbott, 2005; Penn, 2007). In 1997 England finally developed a *National Childcare Strategy* (DfES, 1998) and the ‘New Labour’ Government decided to put the previously diverse administrations under the same umbrella. In the above document, emphasis was given to the availability, quality and cost of childcare while free attendance was announced for all 4 year-old children. The Sure Start programme was part of the reform for offering childcare provision and tackling the problem of childcare availability (DfEE, 2001: 19), especially for those children from economically deprived areas. The *Guide for Sixth Wave Programme* (Sure Start, 2002) identified the purpose of the programme as follows:

to work with parents-to-be, parents and children to promote the physical, intellectual and social development of babies and young children – particularly those who are disadvantaged – so that they can flourish at home and when they get to school, and thereby break the cycle of disadvantage for the current generation of young children’

(Sure Start, 2002: 3).

Part of this reform was the introduction of *Birth to Three Matters* (DfEE, 2003) a framework for practitioners who work with children from 0 to 3 years old. The framework demonstrated for the first time in England the Governmental interest in children between 0-3 years old, while it has been characterised as a ‘milestone’ (David, Goouch, Powell and Abbott, 2003: 17) ‘in recognising and valuing our youngest children and the contribution made to their growth and development by the adults in their lives’. David et al (2003: 22) also stress that the framework: ‘steers away from subject, headings, traditional areas of experience and distinct curriculum headings and takes as its focus the child’. It is based on the notion that children’s learning is ‘holistic with many inter-connections across different areas of experience’ (David et al, 2003: 25). Brooker (2008: 25) sees the *Birth to three Matters* as a ‘first steps on the road to school’. As Pugh (2005) discusses, the *Birth to Three Matters* as a separate document shows that there was clear distinction between over and under three’s, while the notion of bringing parents and services together reveals the government’s intention of poverty reduction in relation to parental workforce and better

school performance (Glass, 1999; Ball and Vincent, 2005). The last emphasis on future orientated childcare has been strongly criticised by Lister (2006) who states that it clearly prioritises profit (for private nurseries) in the name of children's welfare.

With the *Ten Years Strategy* (HM Treasury 2004) document the Government's main target was to 'to ensure that every child gets the best start in life and to give parents more choice about how to balance work and family life' (HMT, 2004: 1). As Ball and Vincent (2005) state, this document came as a response to the previous criticism over the emphasis on adults and not on children themselves. Additionally, with the *Every Child Matters* (DfES, 2004a) documents, a shared responsibility is emphasised across many departments and many ministries to ensure that the following five outcomes will be achieved: be healthy, stay safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution and achieve economic well-being (DfES, 2004a: 9). Emphasis also is given to assure participation in decision making as part of the 'make a positive contribution' element. The Early Years Development and Childcare Partnerships (EYDCPs) and the Sure Start programme were organised to provide services to those children who are up to four (DfES, 2004a) while a new curriculum framework was introduced. The *Early Years Foundation Stage* (EYFS) (DfES, 2007) provides a common framework for children from birth to five years old - seeing children from birth to five as a coherent group (DfES, 2007). Additionally with the *Five Years Strategy for Children and Learners* (DfES, 2004b) free access (12 ½ hours per week) to Early Years' Settings for all 3 year-old children was given, while Children's Centres were characterised as integrated with available access from 8am to 6pm, for 48 weeks of the year (DfES, 2004b: 22). More recently HM Government (2009) has announced the extension of free provision for all children aged two, the extension of maternity paid leave (9 months), recognising also the paternity right for leave (2 weeks). Pugh (2010: 8) now states the importance of the EYFS (2007) as 'a statutory commitment to play-based, developmentally appropriate care and education' for all young children.

Despite the above reforms there are still many who are critical of the government policy. Firstly, the provision is still fragmented and, as McGillivray (2007) argues, problems have been found in the transition from the EY setting to compulsory education. This leads to Clark and Waller's (2007a: 12) worries that 'if the emphasis is on structural change, this may hide the need for cultural change as different workforces with different ways of working come together'. Additionally Pugh (2010) argues that the learning outcomes of the framework are not according to the needs of all children, while there is a fear that the goals of the National Curriculum, as implemented to four year old children in reception

classes, may lead to more learning outputs. Penn (2007) argues that although the government shows that it is working towards tackling social inclusion and inequality, the main focus was to change the attitudes for those families living on welfare benefits to encourage them to get involved in the workforce. Vincent and Ball (2005, 2010) also argue that despite the introduction of the Child Tax Credit there are still problems in affordability. Additionally, they mention that access depends on the location of the Sure Start settings without considering that poor children are not only present in the big cities but also in suburban and rural locations. They also found a general lack of availability with many parents being on a waiting list before their child was born.

Additionally, there was such connection of the child's well being with parental well being (Ball and Vincent, 2005; Roberts, 2000) that some writers had doubts about whether the real intention was children's learning and women's inequality (Penn, 2007) as the structure of Sure Start settings were more like family intervention programmes rather than just day care centres. As a result, Penn (2007) states that those centres in the end did not make any difference in children's and families lives, as parents did not decide to start work and leave welfare benefits. Hence the Sure Start Centres (now called 'Children's Centres') involved the local authorities' full administration trying to link the parents with the labour market, running classes for gaining skills together with the other social purposes. Additionally, Pugh (2010) argues that many early years' settings are run on a private or volunteer basis and are very dependent on Governmental funding which means that if the Government decides to reduce the financial support, the influence will become visible by footing the bill to parents.

Campbell-Barr (2009) found that for the English case there is such a strong connection with business that there is a tendency for imbalance between profit and care, creating diversity in the provision and erosion of the connection not only with the education but also with the care. Roberts (2000) also has concerns about the evaluation of the programme as each child is coming from a different background while the programme focuses on the average performance of the children. Hence Penn (2007) stated that Governmental tolerance towards the expansion of the private sector against the public shows the real intention of supporting the profitable idea of those institutions against the universal and for all early years' education and care that OECD (2006) recommends. She states that the government condones the phenomenon and automatically negates the *National Childcare Strategy* (DfEE, 2001), without any fuss. What is really problematic for Penn is that the phenomenon of privatisation has been seen as normal progress, even in the circle of

academia and feminist domains. However for Penn, (2007; see also Stoltz and Churchill, 2007) it seems that the real aims of the reform of 1997 were more correlated with the increasing of taxation and the decreasing of the social benefits by convincing mothers to enter into the labour market and clearly leaving early years' education and care under the business-for profit domain.

### *2.1.3 Education, Care and Age segregation: a persistent but unreasonable division*

It seems from the OECD (2006) report that it is the trend in many countries for children under three to attend early years' settings, whether in the private or public domain. It is also apparent that there is a clear separation between provision for children under and over three across the countries (Bennett, 2003; OECD, 2001, 2006). For Bennett, this age segregation resulted from the construction of the family (nuclear family). Industrialization, the wave of urbanization and the immigration to the industrialized areas significantly reduces the opportunities for children to learn from elders (Rogoff et al, 2001; Kelle, 2010; Aries, 1978; Hagestad and Uhlenberg, 2006). In addition to the above, the placement of children into school classes according to their actual age significantly increases the competition and the structure of the society (Rogoff et al, 2003; Lee, 2001; Hagestad and Uhlenberg, 2006).

The predominant assumptions about child development based on age have been generalised from research in European and American projects (Rogoff, 2003; Robbins, 2005; Burman, 2001). However, Rogoff (2003) claims that generalisations in cultural studies should be avoided and be elucidated into the particularities of each case. Essentially, these generalisations concern issues around what skills the adult should expect the child to accomplish at each age. Rogoff (2003: 4) emphasises that in sociocultural approaches 'different cultural communities may expect children to engage in activities at vastly different times in childhood, and may regard 'timetables' of development in other communities as surprising or even dangerous'. Diverse expectations obviously depend on the different conditions and customs, as Rogoff (2003: 6) claims. Thus children's performance in activities depends on the meaning those activities have in their lives and to what extent they are part of their own cultural routines. Under these circumstances, Rogoff interrogates the predominant theories about the generalisation of human development and states that nowadays, more than ever, the fact that different cultures are becoming closer suggests a need to question the theories which see human development as a linear process passing through specific stages.

The overview of the OECD (2001, 2006) reports and counts the continual segregation between education and care in most of the countries as a contributory factor affecting government funds from early years' to secondary education (Corsaro, 2000; Bennett, 2003; Vandendroeck 2006b; Press, 2007). Due to the governmental failure to see education and care as a coherent unit, in many countries all around the world there seems to be a striking discrepancy between the provision for under and over threes. Vandendroeck (2006b: 364) states that in the historical issues are embedded 'the subsidised liberty', a term that appears for (the first time in Belgian legislation in 1919) and seems to influence the childcare reforms since recently. The subsidised liberty in childcare was based on the discourse that the childcare is private and not public responsibility. As Vandendroeck (2006b) argues, the gap between education and care (for instance in Belgian childcare) seems to be spread around most of the European countries (OECD, 2001, 2006) and is a result of the dominant discourses of individualisation and contextualisation of social problems, such as child mortality or school failure, into parents and specifically mother's responsibility. However, what seems to be further problematic is the fact that these issues are normalised and naturalised according to the values and the culture of the dominant middle class terminating any debate about educational context in childcare in contrast with kindergarten (Stefansen and Farstad, 2010).

According to Bennett (2003), the division between education and care and simultaneously between over and under threes started in the 19<sup>th</sup> century (similarly for the Greek case: Gogas, 2001; Papathanasiou, 2000). The aforementioned division was actually reflected in the segregation between kindergarten and daycare. The former was more connected with the education while the later with the care. This discrimination still exists in many countries (Bennett, 2003) such as England and Greece. As Bennett (2003) discusses, due to the fact that the origins of daycare was in the charitable basis in order to help children 'in need', two parallel ministers have the responsibility dependent on where the focus of those settings was: education for Kindergarten (Minister of Education) and care for nursery schools (Ministry of Social Welfare) although the provision was referring to the same age. It seems however that for the Greek case the connection of the kindergarten with the education was related with the purpose of the first kindergartens (Chatzistefanidou, 2008). As Chatzistefanidou (2008) mentions the first two kindergardens in 1831 (in Suros) and 1835 (in Athens) respectively were offering services to children from two to eight years, but as part of the private provision. Due to the fact that Greece was not an industrial country, the middle and upper class families followed the trends of the other Western

Countries see them as a good place for the systematic education and upbringing of their children. Later on the education and care of children was under the state's responsibility, kindergarten was organised under mandatory education, while daycare was left to social and health accountability, due to the fact that their main goal was the protection and support of the poor and children 'in need' (Bennett, 2003; Papathanasiou, 2000).

Rockel (2009) states that a similar dichotomy exists in the way that early years' staff are named. Indeed, a dilemma for this study is which term is the most appropriate for early years' staff, as in both Greece and England different terms are used. Rockel (2009) argues that the use of 'teacher' should replace the use of worker, practitioner, carer etc. Certainly these terms reveal a strong connection between day care centres and business. For instance she strongly criticizes the English term 'key worker', arguing that instead of revealing the relationship between the infant and the adult it indicates a more technical approach reminiscent of industry, managers and manual work. She states that the training, the status and the significant role of the early years' staff should be incorporated in one word meaning everything like 'teacher'. Oberhuemer (2005b), however, states that the meaning of 'teacher' tends to be problematic. There is the meaning of transmission that could create possible misunderstandings and danger of schoolification. I shall argue with Oberhuemer (2005b) who proposes the use of 'early childhood pedagogues' and advocates the need for a universally acceptable term. In cross-cultural studies interchangeably using terms such as practitioners, carers or pre-school teachers suggests that, no matter if the terms are problematic (Miller, 2008), we should respect what is used in the national documents and practice. Therefore the term mainly used in England is a practitioner in an early years' setting and in Greece it is pre-school teacher, (*brefonipiokomos*) in a daycare centre.

It could be argued therefore that the explanation for the continual segregation between education and care is clear, despite the fact that it has negative outcomes for the cost, the quality of early years education and care and the woman's status in the labour market. The above segregation reflects, to a certain point, the traditional and social beliefs about the structure of the family and the role of women in the society (Mayall, 2002; Bennett, 2003; Rogoff, 2003; Burman, 2001). Hence, women are viewed as the person mainly responsible for young children's upbringing, despite the significant changes in life style and contemporary social demands which place mothers at the same time into the labour market and force families to abandon rural areas creating demographical changes. Thus there are some debates about whether the 'childcare' should be seen as a private or public good despite the fact that education (pre-school, primary school and secondary school) is a

social good that everybody has the right to experience. As Bennett (2003: 27) states: 'Behind this attitude is a mix of normative economic theory, tradition and a reluctance to increase expenditure on public services, in particular new ones'.

Therefore, a persistent but unreasonable division exists in many countries, with the exception of the Nordic countries. Vandendroeck (2006a, 2006b) recommends that cross-national comparative studies would be really helpful to further understand those debates and investigate the global discourses. As Vandendroeck (2006a; 2006b) states, the dominant role of specific sciences (paediatrics and psychology) is determinant in the matter of the curriculum in early years and the historical exploration of that could be really helpful for further understanding.

MacFarlane and Lewis (2004, 59) argue that there is 'trichotomy' between care, development and education while Rudolf, Leu and Schelle (2009, 16) discuss education, care and upbringing. This triple notion could be seen as resulting from the fact that pedagogy was mostly related to psychology and development (Dahlberg et al., 2007) in what is termed a 'developmentally appropriate curriculum' (Fendler, 2001: 120). The curriculum is strongly orientated to the notion of the child to 'be ready' for the school and acquire specific skills such as reading and writing. This creates confusion between those who are working with young people to question of what is 'appropriate' for them (Kelle, 2010). In this way 'education' overlaps the care and upbringing. As MacFarlane and Lewis (2004: 56), argue 'it has been possible to think of childcare as part of health and welfare, and not education, i.e. the psychological discourses producing health and welfare also produce a shift in thinking ,which impacts on the way in which childcare is constituted'.

MacFarlane and Lewis, (2004) argue that the three terms above cause significant confusion in early years' education and care as a whole related to the programme and those who are entitled to work with young children, dividing the teaching from caring and development. The consideration of the cases in Greece and England illuminates the existence of similar confusion around early years' pedagogy and practice, particularly in relation to children under three. For the English case, Dahlberg and Moss (2005) and Cohen et al. (2005) argue that the new reform of transferring responsibilities to the Ministry of Education relates to how 'education' is perceived, expressing worries that it may be a possible disguise for the 'institutionalisation' of children's lives. Similarly, Koustourakis (2007) argues that in the Greek case the recognition of the kindergarten as part of compulsory education with the

introduction of the new curriculum leads to early ‘schoolification’ of four to six year old children’s lives.

Therefore after the introduction of women into the labour market, the role of care has been transferred to these institutions as places for replacing parental upbringing - to substitute the home. However, Vandenbroeck (2006a) examined the case of Belgium historically and stated that the introduction of the mother into the labour market automatically connects the ‘Fragile child’ with the ‘Responsible mother’. These historically determined discourses about the ‘good mother’ join together with moral discourses of ‘what the mother should be’.

Dahlberg et al. (2007) and Penn (2007) state that the same period in the UK was characterised by a strong influence of attachment theory (Bowlby, 1969) and the individualistic notion of working with children. However, a similar notion to the British one also appears both in Belgium and in the Greek day care centres. The strong influence of attachment theory with the one-to-one interaction is also clear from the research that has been conducted in Greek case (Mantziou, 2001). For Moss (2007a,) across this ‘pluralism’ there is always a commonality that shows the general tension for homogenisation. For example, Stoltz and Churchill (2007) comparing the policy in the UK and Sweden found a tendency towards future investment and social coherence in both countries, despite the significant differences. In both countries the policy was targeted at long term objectives for ‘at risk’ groups.

Hence the high rate of children’s mortality was perceived as a social phenomenon where it was the working mothers not being adequate enough to offer protection and care to their children-individualising the problem and transferring the responsibility to the state to intervene and support the inadequate mother (Lee, 2001; Vandenbroeck, 2006a; 2003; 2006b; Vandenbroeck and Bouverne-De Bie, 2006). The Greek public documents are clear indicators of that idea. Not only children’s mortality but also working children’s failure in the school has been associated with ‘inadequate’ working mothers. Vandenbroeck (2006a) and Lenz Taguchi (2010) state that both in Belgium and Sweden, preschool teachers were more like technicians trying to fix the child and training the mother to be ‘a good’ one. Hence the role of day care centres seems to become a place of ‘developmentally appropriate’ practices (Kelle, 2010).



#### *2.1.4 The curriculum in early years' education and care*

It is worthwhile stating that across the OECD countries the reforms that started in 1996 and were almost completed in 2002 in relation to early years' education and care show that there was a general trend with the introduction of a curriculum/framework and the transformation of responsibilities from welfare to the educational ministry. From the review of OECD (2001, 2006) and from relevant publications (Bennett, 2005, Oberhuemer, 2005a; Laevers, 2005) it seems that the curriculum introduction was followed by the recognition of early years' education and care as a milestone for later life with the introduction of the need for systematic training of the pedagogues.

According to Oberhuemer (2005a), this should be seen as result of neuroscience research together with research that supports early years' education and care as an important start for children's later life (Aldersson, 1992; Sylva et al, 2004). Another factor is decentralisation of the responsibilities of services to the local authorities, together with the needs of the global economy for knowledgeable citizens and the notion of curriculum as a means for improving quality, professionalism and co-operation with parents (Dahlberg et al., 2007; Oberhuemer, 2005a).

However, it should also be recognised that the general trend to introduce curricula frameworks shows that early years' education and care has gained more public attention, resulting in the chance for new ideas about the child and childhood to be heard (Bennett, 2005). For instance, with regard to Experiential Education, Reggio Emilia, Te Whariki, High Scope and the Swedish curriculum, it seems that despite the differences they share some common values in relation to the image of the child, children's rights and parent's involvement (Samuelsson et al., 2006). As Laevers (2005) and Bennett (2005) state, these common ideas influence all the other curriculum frameworks. However, although it seems that for over threes there is a curriculum, for under threes there is still division and as Bennett (2005) states, even in those countries who have applied guidance for these children, the governmental support is not continual and as result the staff focus mainly on care.

Bennett (2005: 11) has noted across the countries two dominant models of curriculum; the social pedagogic approach and the pre-primary, which represent a different concept of how early years' education and care is understood. The first one focuses more on general goals, emphasising a flexible way of working according the local needs and thus giving more opportunities for pedagogues to experiment. Play is viewed as significantly important,

while the child's engagement in society is highlighted. The second model is strongly orientated towards preparation for primary education. The curriculum in England is an example of this approach. For example, the EYFS (2007) is more than 114 pages with clear instructions of what the adult should expect from the child at each age.

Laevers (2005) notes that the more the early years' education and care is seen as a preparatory stage for the primary school, the more detailed the applied curriculum is. Kelle (2010) states that when the child's development is taken as 'a fact' then pedagogues and other experts are consulted to negotiate and offer diagnosis on the child's skills and abilities. So it seems that if a child cannot reach the appropriate developmental stage, then the child is in danger of being classified as developmentally not ready (Kelle, 2010). Kelle states that the term 'developmentally appropriate' tends to replace the 'age' appropriate. Hence in the above example pedagogues appear to work as seekers of specific characteristics and predictions by using activities and equipment. However, as Kelle (2010) argues, such a kind of 'age' appropriate evaluation can easily lead to normalisation and naturalisation as the framework does not fully allow for the dynamics of the interactions and discourses behind them - although there is an EYFS category of 'working towards'.

Bennett (2005) contends that there are cases in the social pedagogic approaches where educators understand the open framework as only child-focused and that this approach can be seen as problematic in terms of working together with the child, as practitioners focus only on observing without interacting with the child. Laevers (2005) and Bennett (2005) also argue that the curriculum itself can not stand alone while the new reforms in all those countries were in fact more orientated to the meaning of an open or flexible framework strongly influenced by viewing the child as competent and rich. Hence they argue that it is the general policy (orientation) and investment-structural support (professionalism, equipment, adult-child ratios) that make the differences in the pedagogical way of working and, as has been noted, the more segregation exists between education and care, the more unfair treatment is observed between the services that are under the responsibility of the Ministry of Education. Hence it is not only the lack of curriculum but also the lack of orientation and structural support that shows unfair-unreasonable treatment for under threes, factors that influence the conditions and the well being of those who are working in such centres (Bennett, 2005). Bennett (2005) recommends that what is traditionally coherent with the whole context is more important than the curriculum itself.

Clark and Waller (2007b) also pose the problem of whether or not the frameworks/curriculum share the same set of values with the whole educational system. Additionally they are concerned about assessment ‘if only a small details are evaluated the whole idea of fostering young children’s thinking and creativity may be lost’ (ibid, 172). Hujala (2002) recommends that the early years’ curriculum should be ‘contextual’ keeping always in mind that: the context where the children are growing up is significantly important for their learning. The curriculum should be viewed as a meeting point between parents, teachers, the child and the whole society and the child’s recognition as able in meaning making. Additionally, she states that the values and principles of each society should be interrelated in every day life, to be connected with those of parents and children while assessment is a responsibility of everybody and not only of teachers and policy makers.

To sum up, Oberhuemer (2005b) clarified that a mandated split system between the over threes and under three’s creates disparities in all levels of provision associated with the staff, parents and children. As Press (2007) states the term ‘education and care’ that rhetorically is used by OECD (2001) to show that the two terms should be seen as a coherent unit is not reflecting the unity of the shared responsibility between the departments of the social welfare, education and health. It is argued (Press, 2007) that no clear policy is applied by the state following children’s real needs and interests and the fragmentation of the services are significantly helpful in supporting the profitable notion of those centres.

Dahlberg and Moss (2005) consider ‘care’ as part of the ethics. The meaning of ‘care’ is associated with responsibility and understanding and not with ethics as safety, taking care outside the home when parent is at work, inclusion and nostalgic notion (day care as the warm, cosy home environment). Press (2007: 194) argues that what those places need is ‘values upon which we believe a system of care and education for young children should be based’.

However, I shall agree with Vandenbroeck (2006a, 2006b, 2003) that as long as the notion of child is strongly interrelated with the notion of motherhood and as such is reflected in the structure and the purpose of the early years’ institutions, then discourses about education or care should be seen more in depth as they are inherited with theories which are normalising practices without considering the ‘“logic of practice” that is different versions of what is “natural”, obvious and necessary around childcare’ (Vincent et al.,

2008: 22) . I shall therefore argue that the term ‘Early Years Education and Care’ should be kept inseparable and mentioned explicitly and not only implicitly simply because the distinction of the two terms for children under three creates confusion about the role and the funding of these settings.

The segregation between education and care is strongly interrelated with the social class, ‘race’ and gender inequalities extended to age segregation (under and over threes). The work of Stefansen and Farstad, (2010) clearly shows that even egalitarian societies like Norway are not working in favour of working class families and this shows that a sociocultural understanding of Education and Care is urgent need. The meaning of ‘care’ has to consider the ‘cultural models of care’ (Stefansen and Farstad, 2010: 124) that may involve upbringing, taking care and education. The parental ‘choice’ (Vincent, Braun and Ball, 2010; Ball and Vincent, 1998) and perspectives about the child and care may differ not because the child and the EY settings are understood differently by the public documents but due to different circumstances under which parents decide about their child’s attendance in an early year’s setting, as the findings of Stefansen and Farstad (2010) and Vincent, Ball and Braun (2008) show.

All the above key themes show that there is no universal set of values about the child and his education and care and as such cultural values should be always taken into consideration. For instance, what a middle class parent experiences in one country does not mean that they experience it in another country (Stefansen and Farstad, 2010). Vincent, Ball and Braun (2008) for example found that English parents coming from both working and middle class were not confident enough to stress their opinions to the nursery staff. If there was an issue that concerned them, they were uncertain about whether or not they should mention their thoughts without troubling their child’s life. This is a significantly important finding that may influence the notion of dialogue, as described by Dahlberg and Moss (2005). Under these circumstances, it is essential to see who is using the services and for what purpose. As such adults’ perceptions about the role of EY settings are associated with what they experience and not how they understood them in association with what they believe children’s future will be like.

I shall therefore argue that emphasis on ‘care’ as ethics may cause misunderstanding within the social policy, underestimating the fundamental right for free education. As MacFarlane and Lewis (2004: 63) argue, it is the discourses of education that ignore the ‘multifunctional nature of childcare’ and that learning, care and upbringing are happening

simultaneously. Rogoff (2003) argues that it is essential to understand how the institutions such as early years' setting influence people's decisions and choice, as in different societies there is emphasis on different obligations, for instance poverty (in England) and national security and working mothers (in Greece).

## **2.2 Agency –The new paradigm of Sociology of Childhood**

(Note: this section is part of my contribution to the book chapter: Waller, T. and Bitou, A. (2011) "The Sociology of Childhood: children's agency and participation in telling their own stories", in T.Waller, J.Whitmarsh and K. Clarke (eds) *Making Sense of Theory and Practice in Early Childhood: the Power of Ideas*. Maidenhead: Open University Press, forthcoming March 2011).

Agency, participation and the 'competent child' are three terms that are central to the current debate about research 'with' children. A dominant theme in the debate is the question of 'what the child is' (Månsson, 2008; Uprichard, 2008). The understanding of childhood as a social construct is a key feature of the 'new sociology of childhood' (James and Prout, 1997). James, Jenks and Prout (1998) state that nowadays, the child and childhood should be seen as an inextricable part of society and culture and not predecessor of the future adulthood. As James and Prout (1997: 7) point out, 'the immaturity of children is a biological fact of life but the ways in which this immaturity is understood and made meaningful is a fact of culture'. For them the child from birth is already a social actor as 'being' and not in the process of 'becoming' (Qvortrup, 1994).

Central to this theory is the recognition of children as social constructors 'active in the construction and determination of their own social lives, of those around them and of the societies in which they live' (James and Prout, 1997: 8). Children are capable of both forming and being formed by circumstances and social phenomena (James et al., 1998). This view both acknowledges and gives voice to children as a social group who have 'remained in silence' for a long time (James and Prout, 1997: 7). The focus is on children as beings rather than becomings (Qvortrup et al., 1994), experts on their own lives (Clark and Moss, 2001) and competent to share their views and opinions (James and Prout, 1997).

James (2005) moves far beyond the traditional psychological notion of the child and childhood. She argues that popular discourses and predominant theories of each historical period determine the way we view and see the child. A further significant development in our understanding of children and childhood relates to the questioning of a 'normative' and

universal childhood for all children across the world and recognition of the plurality of many childhoods (Jenks, 1996), which are determined culturally (James et al., 1998) and historically (Mayall, 2002; Qvortrup, 2009).

Childhood is therefore not fixed and it is not universal, it is ‘mobile and shifting’ (Walkerdine, 2004). This means that children experience many different and varied childhoods. There are local variations and global forms, depending on class, ‘race’, gender, geography, time, (Penn, 2005). As Waller (2009) notes, until recently most of the published research and writing about children, childhood and child development has focused on individual development as a natural progress towards adulthood. This natural progress is conceived as the same for all children regardless of class, gender or ‘race’ (see MacNaughton, 2003: 73). Furthermore, this is a traditional, Western developmental view of the child, which is used to categorize all children throughout the world (Dahlberg et al., 2007). Much of this considerable body of work, written from the perspective of psychology and developmental psychology, has promoted what Walkerdine (2004: 107) suggests is an ‘essential childhood’ (Waller 2009). The new sociology of childhood has therefore been critical of the place of developmental psychology in producing explanations of children as potential subjects, which classify children and their abilities into boxes, according to their age (Corsaro, 2005a) and where the child is studied and tested in an ‘individual’ way (Cannella, 1999: 37).

Furthermore, the general view about children and adult as separate social groups assumes discontinuity and a generational demarcation where children are perceived as counterparts to the adults (James et al. 1998; Olwig and Gulløv 2003). An indicator of the discontinuity between the generations relates to the expectations placed on children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) (DfES 2007) in England (see the point above referring to the classification of children). As Frønes (2005: 269) argues, ‘the expanding educational system from pre-schools to higher education, illustrates the homogenization of children’s life-worlds’. Thus, for Frønes, differentiation between adults and children is produced and maintained due to the institutionalization and the structural homogenisation of childhood. Frønes (2005: 269) uses the term ‘modern differentiation’ to denote how this differentiation depends to a certain point on each child’s ability to act and react as an ‘active subject’. Under these circumstances, childhood is described as ‘something children do’, it is a process where children move forward to the future in contrast with a traditional psychological perspective which assumes children are dependent on their own past (Frønes, 2005: 270-271).

## Agency

‘Agency’ involves children’s capacity to understand and act upon their world, thus demonstrating competence from birth (James et al., 1998; Wyness, 2000; Mayall, 2002). From this perspective, children are viewed as active agents who construct their own cultures (Corsaro, 2005a), have their own activities, their own time and their own space (Qvortrup et al., 1994: 4). It seeks to understand the definitions and meaning children give to their own lives and recognizes children’s competence and capacity to understand and act upon their world. As Waller (2009) argues, despite the fact that children’s agency seems to be recognised broadly in the field, there is an ongoing debate about power and the role of adults in the social construction of childhood and the agency of children in their own lives.

The fact that children can express their feelings and emotions in their surroundings, confirms their ability to act competently. Nevertheless, the term ‘agency’ embeds a more active role (Mayall, 2002). Children as agents can express not only their desires and wishes but they can also negotiate and interact within their environment causing change.

The phrase ‘children are experts on their own lives’, that was proposed by Langsted (1994) and developed as a principle in the Mosaic Approach (Clark and Moss, 2001, 2005), has recently become popular. However, it is clear that there is an ambivalence about children’s agency. In this conception a child is an expert and an adult a novice, thus counter to sociocultural theory which views children and adults as co-constructors of their joint experience (Rogoff, 2003, etc). Additionally, this view separates children from the adult’s world and positions them in their own places and spaces. Thus, children seem unable to participate into two cultures (peer’s and adult’s) at the same time (Corsaro, 2005a) while they do not appear to be influenced by the social changes that are happening in the adult world. Here, Hendrick (1997: 59) makes a critical point about the agency of the child. He argues that changes in the conception of childhood did not just happen, they were contested and not least important amongst the contestants were the children themselves, but in the context of joint interaction with peers and adults.

Corsaro’s (2003, 2009) work on researching peer culture is a significant contribution to understanding children’s agency and competence. Corsaro (2005a) declares that children’s creative role in society is reflected in the fabrication of their own culture and in their contribution to the adult’s world. For instance, he asserts that because children infract adult rules, or extend and confer new meanings on the adult’s world, is an indication of their

active agency in society. However, James (2005) argues that children and adults perceive childhood in a different way. For children, childhood is a transitory period, whereas for adults it is a stable period even though the members are changing over and over again. According to Qvortrup (2009), children and adults are equal participants and 'social products' in society, bearing in mind that whatever happens in their lives should be seen as a result of social construction and not biological determination. Thus children are not 'consumers' of the culture that adults create, as traditional theories assume, but are indomitable social contributors. Waller (2009: 8) gives the following example, to illustrate this point:

'a child who may start to walk unaided at 11 months old is seen as playing an important role in influencing the development of this skill in the particular context of experiences within her family and community, as opposed to an alternative view which suggests that the new found skill is the result of 'normal maturation'.

Corsaro (2005a) develops the following three key terms which inform our understanding of agency: appropriation, reinvention and reproduction. He declares that sociology should see children's socialisation not under the lens of the individualistic and isolated internalisation into adult's society but as a process where children can construct communally and jointly with adults to generate change in society. Thus he recommends the use of the term 'interpretive reproduction' instead of socialisation (Corsaro, 2005a). Corsaro views the term socialisation as problematic because it is embedded the 'dogma' of the isolated individual. He explains that 'interpretive' is used to denote the process where children actively retain the information given by adults when they produce their own peer culture. He views the whole process as taking place in an energetic, pioneering and dynamic way. Meanwhile children do not just simplify what they have taken from adults but replicate it and participate actively to produce culture and change in society – this is 'reproduction'. Simultaneously the term reproduction conveys that children are already members of society affected by the pre-existing culture, which in turn has been affected by historical changes.

Corsaro (2005a: 42) states that children in the early years' setting determine their control upon adult's rules through 'secondary adjustment'. The term refers to children's responses to the regulations of the adult's world and Corsaro (2003) argues that 'secondary adjustment' can easily be applied to early years' settings. Children from the age of two are able to discern between adults and children,



‘while young children might lack the cognitive skills to infer the implications of both the embrace of and resistance to organizational rules for personal identity, they do have a clear notion of the importance and restrictiveness of the adult world as compared to children’s worlds’

(Corsaro, 2003: 141).

Additionally, Corsaro states that through the wrestling between adult’s rules and their desires children manage to determine the constituents of their peer culture. For this reason it is believed children’s partnership and involvement in the adult’s world is vital in young’s people lives.

Corsaro (2003) asserts that, even though children may be at an early age, they can use secondary adjustment once they perceive membership of a group. For instance, an example of secondary adjustment is the persistent bringing of small toys to school by many children, despite them being banned. Children hide them in their pockets so that they are not visible to teachers and regularly bring them out at break in the playground. Here, teachers often recognise their significance in peer culture and may ignore the presence of the toys, thus secondary adjustment affects both children and adults. Corsaro (2005b) argues that Emirbayer and Mische’s (1998) definition of agency is more comprehensive. They define agency as follows:

‘a temporally embedded process of social engagement, informed by the past (in its habitual aspect), but also oriented towards the future (as capacity to imagine alternative possibilities) and towards the present (as capacity to contextualise past habits and future projects within the contingencies of the moment)’

(Emirbayer and Mische, 1998: 963).

Their definition and analysis is particularly valuable as they consider agency as inter-related to time (past, present and future).

However, whilst the important contribution of the sociology of childhood to contesting ‘normative’, singular and static notions of the child and childhood should be recognised, a number of conceptual tensions have recently been identified. Uprichard (2008), for example, suggests that the arguments around the child as ‘being’ and ‘becoming’ are problematic. She recommends an alternative concept of the child underpinned by the

temporality of the two terms. Uprichard argues that the fact that children are not always children but they are moving towards adulthood creates a temporality. In her research she found that the children themselves defined this temporality in their perspectives. For Uprichard, the notion of 'becoming' is controversial due its embedded 'future orientation'. Here, the concept seems to neglect the present circumstances of the child and focus only on what the child will be in the future; a competent adult. She identifies a second issue, also related to competence, where the child is seen as incompetent in front of the skilful adult. It appears as if the child progresses solely to gain the skills and abilities similar to the skilful adult. Uprichard (2008) found this notion problematic as the child is presented always as incompetent in front of the always competent adult. She therefore argues that 'the "being" child is inextricably linked to the "becoming" ' (Uprichard 2008: 305) and the key factor is temporality.

Despite the above criticism, it is important to recognise that the new sociology of childhood has placed, for the first time, the child, agency and structure under serious debate (Qvortup, 2009). As James (2009) argues, what is most important is for the adult to understand children's contribution to society and their right for agency or as Ratner (2000) asserts, the democratic circumstances under which the child can show the potentiality of agency. Ratner (2000) however, contends that accepting an individualistic notion of agency automatically assumes that a child has sole responsibility for their life and decision making. As Ratner (2000: 429) argues 'the individualistic view is so fascinated by the personal decision-making of contemporary agency that it overlooks the alienation inherent in this form of agency'. Thus, leaving children to make decisions in their daily life does not mean that those decisions are only their responsibility. Bae (2009) also argues that there is an overemphasis on the notion of the autonomous child and that the other aspect of 'the child in need' is underestimated. Thus Uprichard (2008) and Corsaro (2005b) state that the new sociology of childhood in an effort to define the child as socially constructed individually neglects the great contribution of the development of child through interaction in sociocultural processes. Here, as Smith (2007) states, is the contribution of sociocultural theory; discerning how children are supported in the co-construction of activities (Rogoff, 2003). The role of the adult is to sustain and encourage a child's interest to 'help focus on the goal, draw attention to critical features of the task, and reduce the complexity of the task. But there has to be social engagement before children can learn and gradually take on more responsibility' (Smith, 2007: 154).

It is argued here that agency should be viewed in connection with the culture as long as the individual is related with society. Agency appears in different forms in each society and individual (Ratner, 2000; Cobb et al., 2005; James, 2009) and as Ratner (2000:422) claims 'each pattern of the social relations fosters different characteristics in agency'. Intentionality and negotiation insomuch relation is needed to objectified and realised together with individual's awareness not only of his/her idiosyncratic characteristics but also with the social position (Ratner, 2000).

Thus, it is argued in this thesis that no matter the criticism that the new paradigm of new sociology has received, there is no doubt that for the first time it places the child, agency and structure under serious debate (Qvortup, 2009). As James (2009) argues what is the most important is for the adult to understand the child's contribution to society and her right for agency or, as Ratner (2000) asserts, the democratic circumstances under which the child can show the potentiality of agency. However, Ratner (2000) states that it is crucial to acknowledge that accepting the individualistic notion of agency, automatically alleges that the child as the only person responsible for her life and decision making, and here are the possible pitfalls. As Ratner (2000: 429) discusses, 'the individualistic view is so fascinated by the personal decision-making of contemporary agency that it overlooks the alienation inherent in this form of agency'.

Thus leaving the child to decide about her daily life does not mean that the decision making is only her responsibility. Kjørholt (2003) found that children's agency is determined by children's tendency to belong to a community. She states that this tendency is strongly embedded in gender and peer relationships, For this reason she states that research with very young children should scrutinize 'the dynamic inter-relations between children's activities and practices with peers on the one hand , and the surrounding society and cultural context on the other' (Kjørholt, 2003: 262). Hence, as Woodhead (2009) and James (2009) argue, the dangerous is not embedded in the theoretical recognition of the child as 'being' or 'becoming' but when it is perceived only as a future investment in the socio-economic policies.

### **2.3 Participation, Educational Settings, Democracy, Citizenship and the Community of Learners.**

This section will critically examine the meaning of participation as a political right and principle value for democracy and citizenship and then as learning through the exploration of Rogoff's theory of 'guided participation' and 'intent participation'. The notion of the

child as a participant and capable of decision making is a prevailing factor in the recognition of the child as a competent social actor. The meaning of participation is twofold; as a right and as a way to learn. Participation as a right is associated with the political recognition of the child as full member of society (James et al., 1998; Qvortrup, 1994; Corsaro, 2003, 2005a) while participation in learning through a 'community of learners' is a concept developed by Rogoff (1990, 1998, 2003; Rogoff et al., 2001) and Lave and Wenger, (1991; Wenger, 1998; Wenger et al., 2002).

In early years' settings both meanings are strongly linked with 'the listening to' approach as a pedagogical way of working with the children (Rinaldi, 2006; Rinaldi, 2005; Clark and Moss, 2001, 2005; Dahlberg et al., 2007; Moss and Petrie, 2002; Dahlberg and Moss, 2005). Documentation plays a particular role in the 'listening to children' approach where practitioners are encouraged to be reflective about a child's learning, a view that has been inspired by Malaguzzi's idea that children express themselves through a 'hundred different languages' (Edwards, Gandini and Forman, 1998; Rinaldi, 2006).

### *2.3.1 Participation as a right in early years' settings*

Participation is defined here as children's right to participate in processes and decisions that affect their lives. This perspective is formed by both recent theory and policy impacting early childhood. Firstly, it follows the acknowledgement of the significance of children's agency (the sociology of childhood, above) and has also been strongly influenced by the introduction of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (*UNCRC*) in 1989. Internationally there is now an overwhelming emphasis on the recognition of children as active citizens with the democratic right to participate as result of the introduction of the *UNCRC* (Smith, 2007). Children's right to participate is typically given consideration in Western countries and is a core component of early years' policy. For example, in England, following the *UNCRC*, the *Children Act* (DfES, 2004a) and *Every Child Matters* (DfES, 2004b) established the right of the child to be listened to.

Article 12 and Article 13 of the *UNCRC* (1989) advocates, the child has the right to free expression of thought, while the adult is clearly responsible for taking their view into consideration. With the new version of the *UNCRC* (2005), Comment No 7 clarified that children's views should also be taken into consideration in policy making, no matter their age. However, Lee (2001) states that the *UNCRC*, despite the influence that may have had in the new trend towards child's participation, it does not consider matters such as cultural differentiation and diverse legislation between the countries. Also, the capability of the

child is conditional and interrelated with parents as exclusive facilitators. It is more like a moral document offering a 'global place' of promises directed from the view of the child as a future investment. Considering the case of Greece, which signed the convention in 1991, except for fundamental and universal rights such as protection, survival, exploitation, Articles 12 and 13 are not integrated in any of the official policy documents for early years settings. Unlike England where *Every Child Matters* (DfES, 2004b), *Birth to (Three) Five Matters* (DfES, 2002, 2007) all have had significant focus on the rights of children and fostering participation.

There have been a number of criticisms of the recognition of a child as a full citizen and right holders. Realising participation in practice, however, requires a commitment to providing appropriate contexts in which children can actively explore options necessary for active participation. As Bae (2009: 391) argues, participation goes beyond mere 'individualistic choice routines'. In this endeavour children's views of their own childhood are particularly significant (Waller 2009) and an important aspect is children's own views of their daily experience, shared with peers and adults. Qvortrup et al. (1994: 2) argue that 'children are often denied the right to speak for themselves either because they are held incompetent in making judgements or because they are thought of as unreliable witnesses about their own lives'.

Kjørhort (2001: 68-69) views the general movement towards the right of children to participate in decision making as a 'nodal point' in political and public discourses. However, Kjørhort believes that the child is constructed in contradictory and paradoxical ways within these discourses. On the one hand, children are presented as competent and on a par with adults and on the other hand, children are placed in their own world as having their own culture and being under threat from the adult's world (Guløv, 2003). As Guløv (2003: 24) argues it is the state that needs the child to be self-directed but still the child itself does not have 'any influence on adult's ideas of what is proper childhood' for her.

For Kjørhort (2001) a mythical and nostalgic view of the child in the public narrative is problematic and dangerous, as childhood is presented in an inactive and vulnerable mode. Here the increasing tendency for adults to supervise and organise children's activities within institutions leads to children's culture being threatened in the same way as some animals or plants are endangered. According to Kjørhort (2001: 72) the 'public narrative that 'children are an endangered people' may be seen as a 'post-modern version of childhood'. Further, Kjørhort asserts that the acknowledgment of children as active

participants should be seen in economic terms as not only part of child emancipation from the family and the private arena but also as a result of the general public consensus of the child as ‘human capital’ and as a ‘productive resource’.

Voice and agency are key elements in the field of childhood studies. Agency is defined as a way for children to articulate their perspective and views, while voice refers to children’s meanings and wishes, complaints and prospects (Smith, 2007a). As long as children are perceived as holders of rights, the concept of active actors and voice is integrated. The adult’s role is not precluded but is balanced with a child’s independence and the concept of ‘co-actor’. Smith points out that the trend of ‘listening to children’ as a result of the Declaration of Children Rights and the Sociology of Childhood does not mean giving superior importance to what the children say and excluding the adult’s role but it is a trend to try to better understand children’s best interests through listening and observing.

Furthermore, there are a number of writers who deconstruct the meaning of participation in public discourse. James and James (2001), for example, discuss the inclusion of the child in decision making in UK and argue that it does not mean that the child is integrated in society as a full member but could be also interrelated with more responsibilities rather than rights. As with James and James (2001), for the Greek primary school the New Cross Thematic Curriculum (2002) demands the full involvement of the parents in children’s learning and supporting the work of the school. Additionally, with the new curriculum children are expected in the first class of primary education to have already acquired linguistic and mathematics skills. Koustourakis (2007) argues that with the decision of the kindergarten (4-6 years old children) to be integrated in compulsory education (N. 3518/06, ΦΕΚ 272/06 τ. Α’) the Greek Government follows the decision of EU in Lisbon (2000) without considering issues of socio-economical difference. In the same way, the child in EY education and care is expected to acquire certain skills before entering to the first class of the primary school. This impacts even more children’s lives in Greece considering that the majority of the children over 7 attend already *frontistiria* (‘φροντιστήρια’, private afternoon lessons at home or ‘private schools’ where parents pay private teachers for children to be taught foreign languages [not only English], music, mathematics and literature).

James and James (2001) argue that the movement of participation in the UK should also be seen as a way for the government to control young people (as result of the high rates of school truancy and bullying) and to transfer the responsibility of educational failure

exclusively to the family and to the individual. Participation as a right has been contested and perceived as a means to transfer the responsibility for social failure to the individual (Stoltz and Churchill, 2007; Alderson, 2000b; James and James, 2001). Johansson (2005: 114) also observing children from one to two years old found that children can understand the meaning of rights but it is the adult who does not respect the children's integrity, 'the ability to make choice, to express preferences and to be in personal control'.

Olwig and Gulløv (2003) argue that placing children into the Early Years Education and Care institutions as a right does not allow for child choice of attendance. For instance, the Greek child with the integration of the kindergarten within compulsory education does not have any more the choice to decide whether or not they want to attend the kindergarten on an everyday basis, while there is no evidence about what children think of Early Years Education and Care and the programme.

The concept of children as having the right to participation is not homogeneous but is complex and queried by many writers. Smith (2002; see also Clark and Percy –Smith, 2006) states it is not just about involvement and for this reason participation should be seen from a sociocultural stance: the person, the time, the space, the expectations, and the role. A child's upbringing and whether or not they have been encouraged to express themselves freely should be considered as a factor which determines participation. Adult support and encouragement is significant as the learning from sociocultural stance is an ongoing process and as such 'children gain experience and their skills and competence grow, they become more able to initiative and share responsibility' (Smith, 2007a: 148).

Gulløv (2003) found despite the fact that they are 'institutional customers' (ibid 31), parents do not welcome liaison in practice. She points out that early years' settings have three characteristics: public, personal and intimate place. For the staff it is a public place, from the child's point of view is part of the personal and a place where he can meet his friends (see also Markström and Halldén, 2009). Furthermore, the structure of the day care centres and the whole pedagogical programme reflects strong cultural norms relating to the children's attachments to their parents and the uncertainty around if a child should be viewed as vulnerable and dependent or autonomous and competent. Gulløv (2003) asserts that all of these discourses, despite the fact that they are in contrast, have one common feature relating to the uncertainty of where to place the child in society.

### *2.3.2 Democratic Values and Citizenship in Early Years Education and Care – the Pedagogy of ‘Listening To’*

Giving children the chance to talk about their thoughts is not only related to the matter of rights but also to the value of democracy (Moss, 2007; Sheridan and Pramling Saluelsson, 2001; Dahlberg et al., 2007; Dahlberg and Moss, 2005; Emilson and Johansson, 2009). However, Berthelsen and Brownlee (2005) state that for children under three years old, who attend day care centre on the daily basis they do not experience participation due to adult's beliefs related to the dichotomy between education and care. Dahlberg and Moss (2005), Dahlberg et al., (2007), Moss (2005, 2007a, 2007b) and Dahlberg (2009) advocate that early years settings must become places for democratic nourishing today more than ever due to the growing political interest as the reforms that follow after 1997. For Moss (2007b), Dahlberg et al. (2007; Dahlberg and Moss, 2005) what should problematize individuals and the academia is the lack of pluralism among those reforms. There is commonality without any differentiation. It seems that there are dominant discourses that are usually heard and tend to lead to a kind of homogenisation.

The recognition of being part not only of the family but of the whole society (Corsaro, 2003, 2005a; Rogoff, 1990, 2003, 1998) places children in a position of being citizens with rights and responsibilities, helping the adult to understand them as both co-constructors and participants. The nourishing responsibility does not only fall on the family, especially to the mother but to all members of society. Understanding the child as an active participant additionally helps adults to move beyond a dualistic notion about the child (Lenz Taguchi, 2010) and build up different relationships between all those who are responsible for them (Dahlberg et al., 2007).

Hence, Dahlberg et al. (2007) state that the meaning of pedagogy and its role is related to those discourses which view the child either as a productive, and receiver of knowledge or as a ‘rich child’. This kind of pedagogy based on communication and dialogue has been termed the ‘pedagogy of listening’ to the child (Rinaldi, 1993, 2005, 2006). The mosaic approach has been developed for this purpose by Moss and Clark (2001, 2005; Clark 2004, 2005) inspired by the Reggio Emilia approach where documentations play a significant role in the construction of the shared meaning. Clark and Moss (2005) described the mosaic approach as a multi-method tool of listening to children using both traditional and participatory methods (see Chapter 3).



Consequently, for Dahlberg and Moss (2005) early years' settings should not be seen as the least places for policy and ethics but in contrast should be theorised as places with great potentiality for policy and ethics. The meaning of quality is replaced (Dahlberg et al., 2007) by the notion of meaning making. This is because the first term is interrelated with universal expectations and norms while the second is interrelated with understanding and relationship.

However, it is not only the child but the practitioner who is perceived differently. Rinaldi (2006) proposes the attainment of being a 'good researcher' not a 'good teacher' or transmitter of knowledge. The programme is more flexible and open while practitioner's role is to scrutinise and weigh out whether they should be supportive, directive or a good observer having a broad knowledge from different scientific fields. It is what Rinaldi (2006) names as 'a culture of being researcher', being open and ready to work at any time in the here and now situation with the unpredictable child - searching for more than one solution. The teacher's role is not to eliminate but open up the possibility for more than one solution co-constructed together with the child. This projective way of working replaces the narrow meaning of curriculum. Documentation is key to the evaluation of the process making practices visible and at the same time deconstructing the dominant discourses.

It is a procedure where the teacher and the child are learning together and mutually. From one aspect, the practitioner supports a child's learning and from the other side the practitioner learns from the way the child acquires knowledge. However, what the adult learns from the child is not simply based on observation. The documentation is not simply a collection of the evidence based on observation but should include diaries, videos, narratives, charts and discussion with colleagues. The documents thus become visible and sharable for discussion and reflection. The visibility gives the alternative of re-listening and re-examining the events where the child or the teacher jointly were playing a central role. The teacher separately or together with the other colleagues consequently builds reciprocal meanings and values (Rinaldi, 2006).

Furthermore, Dahlberg et al., (2007: 156) identify a number of risks and dilemmas in using pedagogical documentation. Firstly, they argue that 'the classifications and categories that we use also function as tools for inclusion and exclusion – we can then place the children and their doings into categories of normal/non-normal'. The practitioner through her influence on the process of the child's identity construction may exercise power and

control. Dahlberg et al., (2007) go on to pose important questions concerning what right we have to interpret and document children's activities and what is ethically legitimate. Despite the many complexities that documentation might create in research with children, it is a process that opens up the possibilities 'for understanding and being understood' (Gandini and Goldhaber 2001: 133). It is what Rinaldi (2006: 98) describes as 'pedagogical research' - the process of searching for the meaning that only the child can offer. What is proposed by Rinaldi is to 'create a culture of research' in working with children to help them to reflect and clarify their achievements. Goldman-Segall (1998: 93) discusses 'establishing a rapport' between the child and the researcher while children view the researcher as an adult but acknowledge that her role is not to direct, interrogate or engage in surveillance but to share their experience. In this way, adults and children become collaborators or 'partners in learning' (Goldman-Segall 1998), sharing the same story, their own story in a context they have jointly constructed.

### *2.3.3 Participation as learning: a 'Community of learners'*

It was Loris Malaguzzi (1993) who first spoke about the 'rich child' in contrast with the 'poor child'. The child who is strong and competent, able to act and interact with one hundred different ways. The Reggio Emilia child is a child who can express his feelings and communicate with others in different ways and not only verbally (Rinaldi, 2006; Edwards et al., 1998; Gandini and Edwards, 2001).

Dahlberg et al. (2007) as has been previously discussed, emphasise the democratic notion of working in early years' education and care through dialogue. Rogoff (2003) on the other hand emphasises how the child is interacting with the other members of the same society, learning actively and becoming a full participant. Rogoff's notion about the child and her learning is that it has been inspired by the structure of different societies including both of what Dahlberg et al. (2007) name as minority and majority societies. In contrast, Moss and his colleagues have been inspired by the Reggio Emilia approach, which they acknowledge cannot be apply in every society due to the elicited way, demanded dialogue and values that may not be acceptable by everyone.

Rogoff et al. (2003) researching different cultural communities, have found that each society has different typologies of interacting and learning from each other, even understanding each other. Additionally, Tobin et al. (2004) and Cameron (2007) show that what is a principle and value in one society can be unacceptable or 'neurotic' (Tobin, 2005: 422) in another. Tobin (2005: 425) uses the term 'cultural relativism' stating that 'the

beliefs and practices of a culture cannot be meaningfully evaluated using the criteria of another culture'. Furthermore, Tobin et al. (2004: 129) recently found that even in the same society after a certain period the societal changes are more reflected in early years education and care, the changes relate to a 'national mood'. For this reason they are concerned about whether or not approaches such as Reggio Emilia could be effective solutions for societies that face different societal problems.

In Rogoff's notion of a community of learners the individual's failure is the responsibility of the society as a whole, not of the family or of the individual. Hence the 'rich', autonomous child, proposed by Dahlberg et al. (2007) and inspired by Malaguzzi should be seen as a new way of seeing the child according to their needs through the historical changes and the new understanding of the role of the parent-as partner and not fully responsible for the child's decisions in the era of globalisation. For instance following Rogoff's theory it would be unacceptable for some societies such as those which Rogoff describes (1990, 1998, 2003) to see the child as autonomous and competent or for western societies it would be unacceptable for a child to use real tools such as knives since they are infants or like in the Japanese case (Tobin et al., 2004) to leave the children alone to solve their fights.

Additionally, research has shown that children intend to create places where the role of adult is not always permitted (Corsaro, 2003, 2005; Waller, 2006, 2007). The 'children's spaces' described by Moss and Petrie (2002) are places where children are in dialogue with an adult. What if the child is not in the mood to negotiate with adults about what Corsaro calls 'hidden places'? Burke (2008) points out issues of 'visual rights' mentioning that trying to understand a child's world by visualising their lives may contain the notion of controlling. Similarly, Tobin (1995) states that the wave of encouraging so called 'self-expression' pedagogy as a principle, is firstly of all a value supported by the middle class, hence it can cause serious inequalities for those children who attend settings and are not aware of similar values. Corsaro's (2005a) work about the peer culture is a strong indicator of how children in their own culture differentiate adult's discourse and arrangements through their own play showing their disagreements and concerns. Similarly, Waller (2006: 93) argues that in this case adults just need to 'learn from the meanings that children ascribe' to those activities that are not part of adults planning and for this reason proposes the meaning of 'spaces for childhood' within which children can exercise their agency to participate in their own decisions actions and meaning –making, which may or may not involve engagement with adults'. Through the child's ability for 'interpretative

reproduction' the adult can 'see' what the child believes about the adult's order without intervention, thus becoming sensitive to his/her demands and able to change planning respectively.

Mannion (2007) recommends that the whole approach of participation and listening to children should take into consideration spatial and relational issues between the adult and the child and where the relationship is taking place. It should also take into consideration the culture of both adults and children. However as Jans (2004) states today society is moving towards many changes with the need for participation from one side and from the other the child's protection. This bipolar and somehow antithetical notion can easily create confusion between both the child and pedagogues, as it is not clear yet to what extent the child is ready for a such independence and responsibility and adults to accept such a notion about the child. This is why the meaning of participation should be seen as away of understanding the child as an adult (Francis and Lorenzo, 2002).

As Jans (2004) notes, the meaning of child participation and citizenship should not be seen as a one sided philosophy because in that case it can easily drop into the pitfalls (see also Millei and Imre, 2009). For this reason Jans (2004: 40) proposed a 'children-sized citizenship' where both the adult and child are learning 'interdependently', designing their own meaning of citizenship where the values of participation as a right, responsibility, identity and contribution are understood in children's playful manner. In particular, with relation to toddlers, Løkken (2000a, 2000b, 2009) promotes the need for the recognition of a 'toddler style' of socialisation. It is a social 'style' through which the individual communicates and makes meaning in a 'corporeal' basis (Løkken 2000a: 173): 'The toddler style is recognisable in varied ways of running, jumping trampling, twisting, bouncing, romping and shouting, falling ostentatiously and laughing ostentatiously'.

Løkken (2000a: 164) claims that 'the manifold social life of toddlers is more (bodily) joyful than toyful, regarding play with small toys. This finding underlines the meaning of the term "toddler", implying characteristics of corporeal motion at a certain age'. This kind of communication emerges either in the routines and their repetition or in a toddler's tension through their initiative to share the same experience by gaze, taste or offer a toy. It is also argued that the recurrence of an activity is more continual and sentimental between peers rather than between a toddler and an adult. Hence Løkken (2000b:532) discusses 'playful quality' indicating that the toddler through play constitutes 'life' or 'being' understood or understanding by attending, intending and sharing during play, this also

accords with Rogoff's (1990) theory of guided participation and intent participation (Rogoff et al., 2003).

The meaning of 'playful' however suggests a joyful mood of frolicking. Hence when a toddler repeats an action he is trying to show feelings and at the same time share it with others. This mood also depends on to what extent the play will be stopped or kept going. Løkken (2000b: 534) found the social 'toddling' style in child's initiatives - activities such as 'the here and there' movement, 'the music concerts', 'proto-tutoring', 'recurrence' or 'mattress reunion' determined the 'playful' style of the toddler. In all these child initiatives Løkken observes that an initial element was repeated within the peers play giving significant meaning to something that was usually meaningless for pedagogues. Some 'playful qualities' according to adults are noisy or irritating, for instance the 'here and there movement' is dangerous as it demands that the toddlers run from one part of the classroom to another and as such they tend to stop, interrupt and ban the activity.

All of the above playful qualities demand action and response while they can be stopped when an adult's intervention is not what the toddler sees as playful. As Jans (2004) states, it is this playful manner of toddlers which make adults misunderstand the child and their competence to be a responsible citizen. Children's ability to withdraw from one activity easily instead of being seen as a privilege to change things in fact has been seen as an indicator of immaturity (Jans, 2004). How, for instance, children construct their identity in a strongly collective way of thinking and working become easily understandable from both Corsaro and Løkken's work.

These findings, according to Løkken (2000a), show the predominant discourses around children's aggression or socialisation, demanding that adult supervision and manipulation of the toddler's behaviour creates many implications for the pedagogical role of the setting as preliminary replacements of the parental role and mediators against unacceptable forms of behaviour. It is thus the recognition children's culture is significant here to understand how children's relationship are interrelated with their peers, adults and the broader society such as curriculum, day care centres and governmental policies. Hence returning to Waller's (2006, 2007) arguments about 'spaces for childhood', it seems that is crucial for adults to understand 'when attentive monitoring is sufficient. When making the wrong choice in monitoring, peer interaction may be more destructive than constructive. When making the wrong choice in participation, successful peer interaction may be destroyed by staff intervention' (Løkken, 2009: 38).

*Rogoff's theory of 'Guided participation'*

In the idea of participation Rogoff and her colleagues build up the notion of a 'community of learners' (Rogoff, 1994; Rogoff et al., 2001; Rogoff et al., 2003). Rogoff (1994: 210) states that 'a community of learners is based on the assumption that learning is a process of transforming participation in sharing sociocultural endeavors'. For Rogoff a child builds up learning through interaction with those who are already familiar with the historical community and not through an isolated discovery.

Rogoff et al. (2001) move beyond the contradiction between adults' control and children's freedom and they propose the concept of guided participation in the community of learners (Rogoff, 1990, Rogoff, 2003; Rogoff et al., 1993; Rogoff, 1994; 1998). The concept of guided participation is described as constituted by guidance but not under the meaning of instruction. The guidance is based on the notion of following what the previous generations left, basically the child is being directed by the values and the practices of the heritage and then goes to the concept of participation within a variety of ways of sharing activity (mutual meaning) where all the partners contribute, extending the cultural practices. The emphasis is on the process and the sharing ideas and experience. Thus in a community of learners 'both children and adults engage in learning activities in a collaborative way, with varying but coordinated responsibilities to foster children's learning' (Rogoff et al., 2001: 7). Consequently, the adults and children are partners and not opponents (Rogoff et al., 2001; Rogoff, 1994).

Rogoff (2003) discusses two processes in guided participation. Initially the partners participate in the 'mutual bringing of meanings' (Rogoff, 2003: 285), trying to find a common line on their different perspectives by using cultural tools such as language and gestures. Then they construct the mutual participation (structure children's opportunities to learn) in the activity they have chosen. Rogoff uses the term 'mutual involvement' instead of societal influence to point out the active engagement of children in the whole process (Rogoff, 2003: 285).

Rogoff et al. (2003) examine how children learn when they participate in shared activities; they argue that careful observation and listening-in are determinant factors in children's learning. This kind of participation is called 'intent participation' and is based on the notion of observation as a means of getting involved in a shared endeavour. However, it takes place mostly in the communities that children are involved in adult's activities or

what Rogoff names as ‘mature activities’. On the other hand, for the communities where there is clear segregation of children from adults’ activities, learning is based on adults who work as transmitters of the knowledge. In the communities where children participate in mature activities observation and listening-in determine children’s intention to participate when they are ready. Absorption, inventiveness and initiative are implicit.

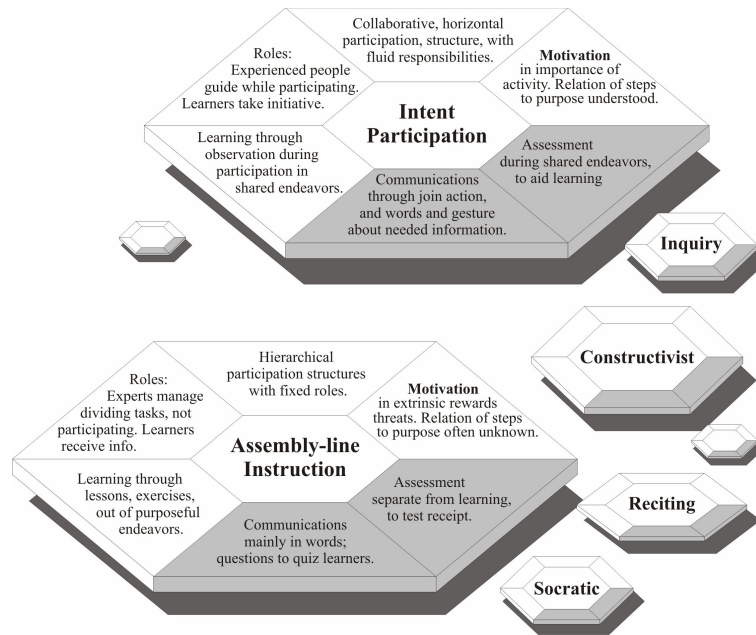
At the opposite end of the spectrum to intent participation there is the assembly-line instruction (Rogoff et al., 2003: 176). The main characteristic of this kind of participation is the transformation of knowledge from experts (adults) with particular emphasis on the productivity and the purpose of the activity. It is a typical form of organised transformation of knowledge in schools and middle class families. Rogoff et al. (2003) make clear that the above division is not the only way of learning and understanding culture. As Rogoff and her colleagues argue, the difference between the two philosophies is related not with the result –as in both cases children learn- but with the process –how the child is learning, the type of communication, the role of those who are involved, from where the initiative is coming and how the assessment is taking place. Morelli et al. (2003) systematically observed 2 to 3 year old children in four different communities (12 children from each community) they found that those communities such as European Americans tended to exclude children from mature activities involving children only on child-focused activities. They state that those kinds of child focussed activities such as lessons, adult-child play, conversations on child-focused topics, and attendance in a school class are meant to guarantee that children are ready to enter later in the adult’s world but they do not help the child to understand the utility of those activities into their real and later life. For this reason they recommend that there must be a connection between adult’s and child-focussed activities.

Therefore in the community of learners model Rogoff and her colleagues recognise asymmetrical relationships between the partners while there is no stability in their roles (for instance between adult and child who is the leader) as the members are changing roles dependent on the task and the flow of the activity (Rogoff, 1994). The notion of a community of learners should not be perceived as a model to balance the two opposite and contradictory models, but as Rogoff (1994) states it is a different philosophy. It can take place either as formal or informal learning, but when it takes place in a classroom the focus is on the adult’s efforts to facilitate children’s learning and not only on the productive aspects of the curriculum.

Rogoff et al. (2003), comparing the two models ‘intent participation’ and ‘assembly-line instructions’, state that they do not see the two models as opposite because the focus is different. For instance, intent participation focuses on the process while the assembly-line focuses on the result. There is also differentiation between the locations. Intent participation can take place everywhere. However, the second model of learning can be found not only in the school but also in the families or in the setting where both of the models can be found. For instance the adult can either direct the child or be directed by the child depended on the situation, the context and who is taking the initiative. This means that there is a dynamic and not stable situation between them. For this reason, it is presented as a multifaceted prism (see Figure 2.1) to show that every aspect is related to the whole tradition.

Thus in Figure 2.1 intent participation seems to be based on a co-operative way of working, where the role of each participant is flexible and different depending on the different circumstances. The individual participates in the group activity smoothly following a personal path and without any direction or preplanning. There is no distinction between the expert and the novice, as both of them are learning through the engagement in the same activity and many times the less expert can take initiative and offer leadership. The motivation and the purpose of the activity are inherited in the whole process and become understandable through the flow of the activity. Rogoff and her colleagues state that this model of participation supplies children with both autonomy and contribution from their earliest years while they can attend simultaneously to more than one activity that is ongoing. The communication between the participants is embedded in the process as ‘in the service’ (Rogoff et al., 2003: 195) while the assessment process is connected not only with the outcomes of the activity but also with whether or not the participant is eager to learn.





**Figure 2.1: ‘Multifaceted traditions for organised learning’ (Rogoff et al., 2003: 185)**

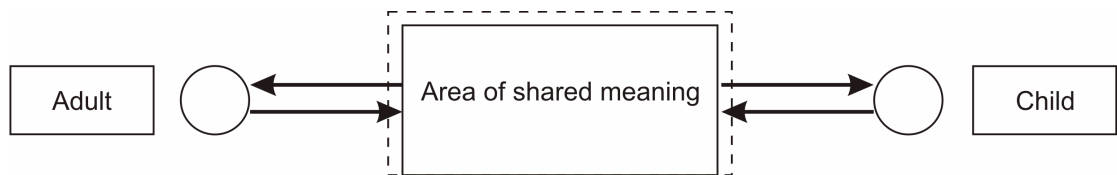
Based on Rogoff’s theory that the participation demands a common field to share, this review of literature will now consider Jordan’s (2004) model of working with young children. This model consists of a comprehensive representation of the shared meaning based on sociocultural understanding as being describing by Rogoff seeing learning as ‘guided participation’ not under the Vygotskian description of scaffolding where the role of expert is essential for the novice’s learning. In Jordan’s model nobody is an expert and both participants are learning from each other.

Undertaking a research project in New Zealand with teachers, Jordan tried to find out if their understanding is co-constructed with the same understanding as children. She found that practitioners notice that children were more empowered when they were co-constructing together rather than when they were following the scaffolding way of working. Practitioners mentioned that in order to share the same meaning with the child they should follow the child’s topics. In this way they found that ‘having developed their own content knowledge the teachers could then use their adult perspective to pose challenging questions and suggest extending activities for further investigation’ (Jordan, 2004: 31).

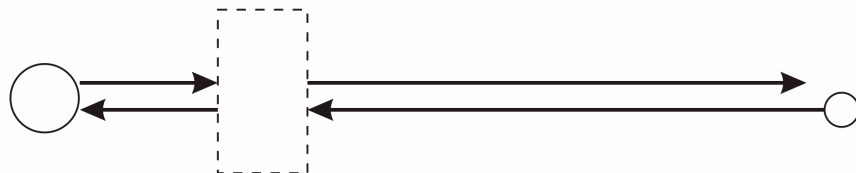
The idea of co-construction is to empower the child during her learning, ‘co-construction is to construct with others’ (Jordan, 2004: 33). In this way neither the child nor teacher is undermined in the process of learning. Thus a reciprocal atmosphere has to be developed. Sharing the same meaning demands that the adult acknowledges what the child thinks, wants, understands and what he knows. However, as Jordan states, the teacher first and

foremost has to learn to share and discuss with the child a topic considering to what extent is a child's or an adult's initiative, 'thus co-construction requires excellent skills of dialogue between teachers and children as well as a willingness to find out more content knowledge about the topic of the children's investigation' (Jordan, 2004: 34).

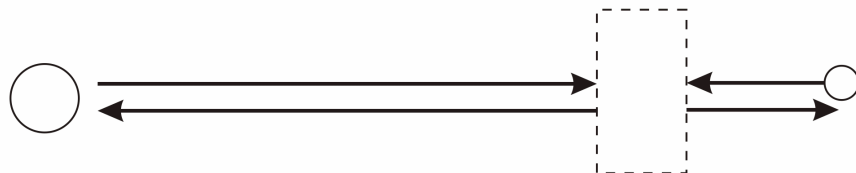
Additionally, as Jordan states it is essential for the adult to know where exactly to intervene. Assuming that that adult is the holder of power and agency, she argues that subordinate groups of people like children can have power and agency only when it is permitted by adults. The sharing of power is presented metaphorically in the following diagram (Figure 2.2). The shared topic is in the middle of the both the child and the teacher and the closer they are to the centre the more shared meaning occurs, while the further away from the centre the less mutual understanding there is. Sometimes, one of the sides is in the centre while the other side is distanced.



a) Adult and child equal partners in interactions.



b) Adult-directed interactions.



c) Child-directed interactions.

**Figure 2.2 Jordan's model of intersubjectivity (Jordan, 2004:36)**

#### 2.3.4 Sociocultural theory (Rogoff) and Sociology (Corsaro)

Sociocultural theory and the Sociology of Childhood are theories that have influenced new ways of seeing children and their rights. Smith (2007) gives an alternative definition of rights. How the meaning of the rights is perceived depends on the holders and who is exercising authority over them. It is 'entitlements, which are interpreted and promoted or resisted differently, depending on the meaning they hold for particular people-most particularly for children and young people, and the persons who have the most contact with them and power over them' (Smith, 2007: 147). The meaning of agency and childhood is varied.

Rogoff (2003) argues that human development is a procedure in which the person is changed by participating in and contributing to sociocultural activities of her community. Emphasis is given to the process (Rogoff, 2003: 62) while learning involves the appropriation of tools and practices of the communities. It is what Rogoff (2003: 56) entitles a '*transformation of participation perspective*'. The individual participates in practices causing change (Personal and Interpersonal) while they construct together what they have found from their ancestors at that historical moment (Cultural-Institutional). Thus the individual should be connected with the cultural practices, the groups (such as family) and the wider community (such as culture).

Corsaro (2005) declares in the same way as Rogoff (2003) that sociology should not see children's socialisation under the lens of the individualistic and isolated internalisation into adult society but as a process where children can communally and jointly with adults settle and generate changes into the society. The whole process takes place in an energetic, pioneering and dynamic way. Meanwhile, children are not just simplified by what they have taken from adults but replicate and participate actively to produce culture and changes in society (reproduction). Simultaneously, the term reproduction shows that children are already members of the society affected by the pre-existing culture and society which in turn has been affected by the historical changes. The process of participation into the cultural routines starts from the time that child is born (Rogoff, 2003; Corsaro, 2005).

Azmitia (2002) states that the comparison between sociocultural theory and interpretative reproduction aspect of Corsaro offers a unique way of understanding issues of power and equity and how comparative studies do not refer to similar or identical contexts but to the universality of goals (ibid: 357). For instance, Rogoff (2003) argues that when we try to understand practices by focusing on the goals of an activity what is meaningful is that each

individual can reach to the same goal (for instance learning, transition) by doing the things differently.

Brennan (2007a) agrees that individuals are socially determined which means that they are formed by others. However, her statement is that the process of learning is not always a willing process. Thus a child is not always enthusiastic about being taught. Challenging adult's rules by inventing different strategies is a process that children often use in order to avoid the collision with adult's demands as 'life is easier for children when they abide by the rules, and security and acceptance are gained in meeting others' expectations' (Brennan, 2007a: 2). Brennan found that children can adapt their goals to adults, they can change them completely by following their own agenda or they can distract the adult in order to escape or blur the adult's order. The whole process takes place in a very 'sophisticated' scheme.

For instance Brennan (2007a) states that children can either follow or ignore an adult's demands. These strategies allow children to investigate the boundaries of social rules and norms without putting their position into danger. Challenging the rules in a devious way protects them from direct disagreement with adults, by using acceptable actions they implement the rules to achieve their own personal goals. Brennan (2007a:4) states that when youngsters continuously 'interrogate' the rules that have been created and upheld by teachers, this means that there is a tendency for cultural change. It is here that Brennan's (2007) question about whose voices should really be listened to is significant. Practitioners are the mediators of the child's wishes and the social expectations and day care centres are places where children's enculturation and education takes place (Brennan, 2007b; Rutanen, 2007; Corsaro, 2000, 2005a). As Corsaro (2000: 91) states, in these institutions the reproduction and change in the adult's culture and society takes place.

Both Rogoff's and Corsaro's theories see children's transition into the society through the lens of participation into the collective, mutual community. What Corsaro names as 'priming events' in Rogoff's notion is called 'participatory appropriation' and 'guided participation', while both theorists argue that the personal, interpersonal and institutional should not be analysed separately and in isolation but all together. However, Corsaro et al. (2002: 323) state that the difference between interpretive reproduction and the Rogoff's theory is the fact that the latter does not bear in mind the 'the importance of socio-economic and power relations'.

As such, Corsaro et al. (2002) defined some differences with the work of Rogoff. They state they have tried to extend socio-cultural theory as they feel it does not fully account for race, ethnicity, and gender. Additionally Corsaro et al. (2002:327) assert that ‘we argue that comparisons within and across Western societies not only capture the effects of the power relations on values and practices, but also reveal how social policies established by political and cultural elites affect which practices and values are legitimized and which are seen as different or even deficient’. For this reason Corsaro et al (2002), in their study about children’s transition from the preschool to the elementary school in USA and Italy, focus on the interpersonal, community and individual analysis as Rogoff did before but they stretch the process by also looking at peer culture and into the power of the social policies in early years education and care which have influence on the values and activities. Corsaro (2005a) also found that children’s participation in adult’s initiatives and activities, produce fear, tension, confusion and uncertainties due to the power imbalance between the child and the adult.

Thus he states that children’s intentions arise as a result of their effort to make sense of an adult’s word. As Löfdahl (2006) argues, the significance of interpretative reproduction is that it gives a picture of child’s socialisation not exclusively directed by the adult but ‘indicates a more reciprocal relationship between the growing child and the environment’ (ibid, 81). It shows that children are holders (or not) of power and they can show this during their peer play when they deal with ideas, beliefs, spatial arrangements and negotiate their positions with their peers. However, in Corsaro’s theory of interpretative reproduction of a child’s perspective is theorised as an indirect outcome of adults’ system of rules. In this respect Rogoff’s theory is gives a more detailed description of adult-child interaction.

Both theorists (Rogoff and Corsaro) describe how the individual contrives the activities. Rogoff’s theory emphasises how children participate in the activities in relation to an adult while Corsaro points his attention towards peer interaction. Rogoff see the peer’s interaction as a dynamic system where they learn from each other by sharing knowledge. Both of them see competence not in relation to performance but as contribution in mature activities as active participation into and not as result of imitation (Corsaro et al., 2003; Corsaro, 2005; Rogoff, 1998; 2003; Rogoff et al., 2003, 2004). In addition to this, they both reject the notion of expert and novice. Participants in the same situations are viewed as equivalent novice and experts. However problematic in Corsaro’s research is the fact it refers only to children that are part of the same age group. As Rogoff (1998) states, the

authority and power axis should not be seen only in relation to age differences but also in the role each person plays in the group. This role is related to having a good knowledge of shared topics and personal relationships. In addition to this, Rogoff (1998) emphasises that research into peer interaction often overlooks the adult's cooperation. Rogoff (1998) agrees that participation in shared endeavours does not always constitute eager participants but she does not further explain how those disagreements are depicted in children's attitudes. She agrees that there are disagreements in the learning process but she sees that as part of the collaboration. In this respect Corsaro's work is more enlightening. In addition to this, Rogoff pays attention to the notion of participation while Corsaro pays attention to the notion of agency. Therefore both of them are considered significant and important for the purpose of this thesis as they give a detailed analysis and description of what the child is doing with or without adults' surveillance.

However, it seems that in the meaning of ethics as being described by Dahlberg and Moss, (2005) there is an overemphasis of the ethos and the dialogical interaction between the child and the adult. Of course the above writers recognise the child's right for privacy but they see learning occurring between the adult and the child as a main element for producing knowledge. Clark and Waller (2007) argue that such an understanding of child's learning may have implications in the pedagogy. For instance, Corsaro and Molinary (1990) found that toddlers intent to create their own routines-activities as such planning, challenging their own skills without pedagogues to be involved. Waller (2006) also found that children in outdoor play created routine places where the adult's involvement was not always needed. Løkken (2009) also argues that, especially for toddlers, the acknowledgement of the particular 'toddler style', their culture and their own way of meaning making is particularly important for the implication of the pedagogy. Waller (2006) contends that 'spaces for childhood' is a notion that protects from the pitfall of instrumentalizing children's play. As such the child as a peripheral learner (Lave and Wenger, 1991), is a right holder of taking the decision to participate when she intends to (Rogoff et al., 2003) and designs her own activities without needing adult involvement all the time to extend and change the adult's activity (Rogoff, 2003, Corsaro, 2005a).

Here learning is based on observation, and on the idea of 'learning curriculum' as an unpredictable element that can take place and happen at any place at any time. Children as 'members have different interests, make diverse contributions to activity, and hold varied view points' (Lave and Wenger, 1991:98) and as such from a sociocultural point of view what is important is for the child to understand her contribution and the purpose of the

activity (Rogoff, 2003; Rogoff et al., 2003; Lave and Wenger, 1991) without a clear need of co-presence. As Wenger et al. (2002:4) argue, in a community of learners it is the members themselves that are meeting because ‘they find value in their interaction’ without this demand to be working together at all the times. In the community of learners, it is the member who decides and develops their own way of interaction that may not involve dialogue.

#### **2.4 Researching Children’s Perspectives and the Competent Child.**

From the review of literature, leaning towards the value of the child as competent, there is evidence that even in the countries that have worked since the beginning of the decade to implement the participatory right of all children in early years education and care, there is still much work to do (OECD, 2006; Johansson, 2009; Konzal, 2001; Emilson and Folkesson, 2006; Sheridan and Samuelsson, 2001). As Burke (2008: 24) states, ‘childhood is shaped by adult attitudes, mythologies and beliefs’. The previous section of this chapter examined the meaning of participation in educational settings and in particular in the day care centres. In this section it will be underlined how the competent child has been highlighted in searching child’s contribution in society.

A number of recent studies on children’s perspectives have been undertaken in the field of peer interaction. Löfdahl (2005) argue that peer’s negotiation about the life discourses such as death or life are valuable because new knowledge is taking place while the context has been found to be significant in creating their own meaning making and gaining new knowledge by extending their pre-existing knowledge. Furthermore, in another research Löfdahl and Hägglund, (2007) searching children’s sharing knowledge about the social power and status within the peers found that the ‘what’, ‘how’ and ‘where’ should be scrutinized in seeking the child’s understanding of how to apply adult’s rules and orders. In another study Löfdahl (2006) found that peer interaction can represent inequalities between children and values that are not necessarily desirable by adults. However, she observed changes in children’s status and flexibility when different peers (usually older children) entered into the same game. Hence she states that pedagogues must be particularly reflective and grasp chances for cultivating ethics in relation to age, gender, power and participation.

Additionally, Löfdahl and Hägglund (2006), similar to Corsaro (2003), found that power relations in children’s peer play are strongly interrelated and represented adult’s norms and rules. During their play, children were clarifying their own rules developing criteria for

who can enter into their play, under which conditions and for how long. However, Löfdahl and Hägglund found that those rules were related with the official (adult) values and norms that orientated the life within the pre- school. For this reason Löfdahl and Hägglund, (2007) recommend that analysis of the practice should firstly be based on children's perspectives and experiences and then seek information on the peripheral elements such as generational order, culture, ways of communicating, knowledge structures which determine these values and beliefs, simply because often what is on the adult's agenda cannot always agree with what is holding children's intention.

The focus of this thesis therefore, is not about rules; neither is it about how children create rules within peer play. However, the above research related to children's social order and peer life offers a different perspective on children's thoughts about the curriculum, always bearing in mind that toddlers do not express their feelings verbally. As Skånfors, Löfdahl and Hägglund (2009), in another ethnographic study in Swedish preschools (with children from two to five years old), found that children's strategies as described above should not be theorised as an indicator of their selfish and aggressive behaviour but as a way of managing sharing and protecting their games. Similar findings have been found initially by Corsaro (2003) and also Williams (2001a) as the example *'We are friends right?'* shows, while Löfdahl (2005, 2006) also found a fragile character of ongoing peer play when children are in continuous negotiation in determining the rules of their games. Skånfors et al. (2009: 105) move further searching for children's strategies for not participating in an activity. They found that children are not always available and during the time they attend the preschool can withdraw by 'acting distanced', 'reading books', 'hiding' in 'creating physical spaces' or 'moving constantly' in both peers' or adults' activities. However, as they note, these strategies are interrelated with the time, space and the kind of activity. It is an arena where 'children's interpretation of the situation and their understanding of the possibility to act guide their agency' (Markström and Halldén, 2009: 120). These findings bring us again to Waller's (2006) argument about 'Spaces for Childhood', with the emerging need to see how children make meaning during the non adult directed activities and what kind of spaces are given to children. If in the child's perception the preschool is not an institution but a meeting point, then we adults should see what the most popular themes are and topics that young children develop during these meetings.

Pertaining to the matter of the planned activities in a toddler class, Emilson and Folkesson (2006) found in their study that the strong classification and structure of the planned activities (as identified by Bernstein, 2000) creates obstacles to children's participation and



their perspectives, while the weak classification and framing encouraged children to participate in a more dynamic way and according to their own terms. They also agree that it is fundamental for teachers to be eager to understand children's perspectives. The results of Emilson and Folkesson's (2006) study suggest that in terms of both participation, as well as children's agency, it is not as a matter of whether toddlers or infants are capable but rather how willing adults are to understand children's agency and actively involve them in planning activities.

Emilson and Folkenson (2006) admit that definitions such as weak or strong classification and framing may lead to oversimplification of the analysis and understanding of participation. They follow such an analysis aiming to show the 'tentative answers' (Emilson and Folkesson, 2006: 225) and similar models have been described by Rogoff et al. (2003) in the meaning of intent participation and assembly line instruction. However, Rogoff et al. (2003) argue that there should not be contradiction between the intent participation and the assembly line instruction as they are not the only models of learning and they should not be seen as dichotomous 'the contrast is intended to bring features of each of these two systems into relief' (Rogoff et al., 2003: 176). The two models of participation can be found taking place simultaneously, in contrast to the description of the Emilson and Folkenson (2006). For this reason, in this thesis the contradiction between the intent participation and the assembly line instruction will not follow the analysis of Emilson and Folkenson (2006). The assembly line instruction will be discussed as a model of learning that may be found in use in both countries (England and Greece) or may not. This assumption is based on the two significant differences between the two countries; the existence or not of the curriculum. What is missing from Emilson and Folkenson's analysis is the learning in social and cultural contexts. It seems that the emphasis is on the social without seeing the culture (children, families, and curriculum). Similarly, Johansson's (2009a) analysis is also missing the cultural dynamics between the peers (the peer culture). Viewing the participation only in association with rights and democracy is missing the meaning of participation as a learning process. The work of Johansson and Emilson and Folkenson are indicators of that. However, both works give a comprehensive analysis of how the child can be misunderstood by the practitioner when the focus is on directed activities and on the values of the curriculum without sharing meaning with the child.

Gallacher (2005), exploring how toddlers reconcile adult demands in connection to spatial arrangements in the toddlers' room, found that the way that the staff organised, reorganised and changed the room, for instance the timetabled programme and the spatial distinctions

of the areas [i.e story book area (quiet area) - messy area, music area (noisy areas)] shows a tendency to exercise control on child's lives as 'adults are taking control and children learning self-control in line with adult expectations' (Gallacher, 2005: 245). Gallacher adopts the notion of Foucauldian panopticism where 'panopticism subjects individuals to potentially constant hierarchical surveillance and the action of normalising judgement' (Gallacher, 2005: 245).

Gallacher argues that staff are influenced by popular manuals for childcare which characterise toddlerhood as 'the terrible twos' and the role of the adult as the manipulator of toddler's behaviour and trainer according to adult's expectations. She argued that in this context the term 'free play' was a myth as most of the activities were structured, the available resources were specific and children did not actually have the chance to choose them. Children avoid getting in trouble with adults expectations but at the same time they try to change the rule in an indirect way simultaneously gaining the adult's agreement (Corsaro, 2003; 2005a). Children's tension to follow their own routines within the daily programme is also an indicator of their competence. Routines are part of children's lives (Corsaro, 2003, 2005a; Gallacher, 2005; Waller, 2006, 2007; Williams, 2001a). Even when there are no adult commands and restrictions, children create routines and based on them reconfigure and extend their knowledge; this could be as an indicator not only of their agency but their competence to do things without always receiving adult surveillance and support. Gallacher (2005: 258) identifies two different worlds in the nursery school. The 'official' world organised by adults and the 'underlife' organised by the peer culture. Both of these worlds are interwoven with each other. Toddlers are full and active participants in the nursery domain, tackling and negotiating within adult's rules and norms. Gallacher's work is significant for two reasons. Firstly she clearly shows children's competence in doing things and secondly, she demonstrates how peers collectively can show their perspectives of adult's arrangements and organisation. However, Gallacher sees adult-child relationships only as hierarchical and not as a symmetrical notion, in contrast with Rogoff (1990). Gallacher follows Corsaro's works combined with the Foucauldian concept of power; she does not see the child in a situation of collaborating and changing the culture but in a situation of a persistent 'fighting' with the adult. Such a combination may lead the peer's interaction to take place only in the 'underlife' without considering that the relationship between the adult-child may not be only hierarchical but also symmetrical depending on the situation. The meaning of 'underlife' is defined by Corsaro (2005a: 151) as: 'a set of behaviours or activities that contradict, challenge, or violate the official norms or rules of a specific social organization or institution'.

This term used both by Corsaro and Gallacher should be simply replaced by peer culture. The meaning of ‘underlife’ constitutes the meaning of secondary adjustment that takes place as a child’s response to adult’s rules. It shows how the adult and child change strategies in order their personal interest to comprehend with the collective ones. However, the interpretation should also be seen under the notion of peer’s collaboration (Rogoff, 1990) to solve a common problem (Williams, 2001a, 2001b) or for the need of togetherness (Hännikäinen, 1999) and the need to learn the new rules of the EY setting (Flewitt, 2005b). As such what is missing from the work of Gallacher and Emilson and Folkenson is the recognition of the ‘multifaceted patterns of dynamic cultural practices’ (Rogoff and Angellilo, 2002: 212).

Matusov (1996) argues that in sharing activity there is agreement and disagreement. As such the secondary adjustment should be seen in relation with the individual’s goals, and how the same activity is becoming understandable from all participants. Analyses based on the idea that the shared meaning between the child and the adults means common beliefs according to Matusov are problematic as there is the assumption of the ‘increasing homogeneity of participation’ (Matusov, 1994: 27). This is problematic in the research of Gallacher (2005) and Emilson and Folkensen (2006) as they see the shared meaning as common understanding without considering that the participants may have different perceptions and purpose of the same activity. The secondary adjustment embellishes common and collaborating understanding within the peer’s but it is the adult who misunderstands the child’s actions.

As Williams (2001a) argues, challenging routines and rules is vital for participants to understand that the culture is not only a transmission from the adult to child but also between peers and Gallacher’s study sees the day care centre as an arena of adult’s exercising control to children without considering the child’s perception which according to Williams (2001a: 318) is ‘an important arena where children meet other children with various experiences, knowledge and interests in a natural way’.

Månsson (2007) undertook research in an early years’ setting in Sweden inspired by the Reggio Emilia approach. From a sample of 26 children (in total) she found that children between 1-3 years old are both competent and incompetent respectively dependent on the construction of the routine programme and the way the staff interact with them. She also states that when the child is perceived as active and the pedagogical environment affords

opportunities of exercising agency, participation is more empowering interrelated with the power relationship between the adult and the child, 'the asymmetry between the adult and the adults and the children might partly be displayed when the children are allowed more space and a more active part in the pre-school practices' (Månsson, 2007: 35). However, the question here is what happens in cases where the child is not in an environment such as one inspired by the Reggio Emilia approach? Do children in these cases not exercise power and agency?

Additionally, Månsson (2007) states that the way the setting is organised is an indicator of whether or not the child is allowed to exercise agency. Månsson's main finding is that children are competent when they are allowed to show their competence. In this way she mentions children are competent 'potentially' and she also argues that the predominant discourses about the child and childhood are those which determine the participation, or not (Månsson, 2008: 38).

The studies discussed above clarify children's competence in association with peer interaction and as a response to adult's actions and arrangements. Basically they provide us with an alternative way of seeing how children express their perspectives of their life during the time they attend the early years' settings. Williams (2001a) argues that children in settings construct their own learning agenda, which is mostly different from that of the adults, while it is constantly based on the spontaneity of the moment. She states that the routines and activities in the day care centre are significantly important for learning opportunities as young people gain knowledge around sharing and caring for each other. However, she notes that the construction of some activities such as circle time may create a phenomenon of exclusion or be troublesome due to the tendency of homogeneity. For instance, some routines demand children to learn a particular code, such as during circle time children sit down and present themselves by raising their hands when a practitioner says their name. Some of the children know that what is valid as a rule during that activity is 'raising' hands. If now they notice that some of their friends do not follow the rule they might implore them to do it because what is understood as valid guarantees full participation. This embellishes the meaning of guided participation (Rogoff, 1990) where the more expert child tries 'as if' being a teacher (Corsaro, 2005a) to show to the younger child the valid attitude. However, what concerns Williams (2001a) is the fact that if the programme does not leave opportunities for spontaneous learning and demands participants to behave in the same way. For example, asking all children to raise their

hands, it is difficult for a child that has a diverse opinion (i.e. does not want to raise their hands) to escape and change the routine without having a disagreement.

What concerns MacNaughton et al. (2007) is to what extent the adult encourages the children to express their views and the extent to which the adult takes these views seriously. Johansson (2009a), for example, states that due to the fact that the majority of the staff are women in the day care centres there is a strong fostering towards the value of caring. Emilson and Folkesson (2006) (discussed previously) saw that even in the countries with a long tradition in a democratic way of being educated practitioners are not always capable of responding to children's wishes. More research, such as Sheridan and Pramling Samuelsson, (2001) in Sweden, shows that children's choice to contribute to the programme is inadequate. According to children's perspectives it is only during peer play that they can make decisions by themselves. Sheridan and Samuelsson (2001) advocate that children's comments show that teachers are not yet ready to fully understand how to share participation with children.

Therefore, it is the manner in which children are treated as active that reveals their competence to participate (Christensen and James, 2008; Duncan, 2009, Emilson and Johansson, 2009), as the above research shows. It seems, however, that a lack of significant research with young children under-three is due to the fact that people underestimate their ability to be socially competent and engage them in research on their lives (James et al., 1998; Corsaro, 2005a; Cousins, 1999; Clark and Moss, 2001). It is the adult's perception itself which determines whether the child is competent or not, as it is the intersubjectivity which informs teacher's understanding of what the child wants and is doing (Johansson, 2004).

## **Conclusion**

Critically considering all the above theories and models it seems that a pioneering pedagogical way of working is influencing practice in some settings where the notion of the 'community of learners' and citizenship move beyond a simple description of a theory focusing solely on the practice of working with young people. Theory and practice is in a dialectical position. In fact, trying to highlight from the review of literature what is methodology and what is theory I found myself getting lost between the theoretical models of participation and the methods used to capture a child's perception. Through the review of literature as a whole there is a clear understanding that those who are working by doing

research in academia with children are strongly interconnected with both practice and theory.

This chapter presents an overview of the problematic nature of early years' education and care for children under three years old. It has summarised recent international research about practitioner's pedagogy and practice in relation to young children's competence. The majority of this research is located in Scandinavian countries. This could be understood as a result of the explicit integration of the *UNCRC* in the curriculum of the children in pre-school and universal provision for children from one to six years old. However, the majority of those studies which have undertaken research with toddlers have not used 'participatory' methods but video filming and observation directed by the researchers. Participatory methods have been grounded mostly in the English case with the innovative work of Cousins (1999) with 4 year old children and Clark and Moss (2001, 2005) in children's geographies, while in most of them, emphasis is given to the process due to the pioneering nature of the technique. In order to capture children's perceptions role play, cameras, map making and tours have been used. No research with children has been found in Greece.

From the review of literature a gap has been found in research with children in association with their perception on the planning of the activities, both in Greece and England. The review of literature shows that the meaning of participation is integrated in the official documents in England related with the provision for children under three however no significant research has been found in their understanding of the EYFS (DfES, 2007). In Greece the review of literature shows a lack of reform and curriculum while no research has been found with children and their perception in EY settings. This research therefore appears to contribute to filling a gap in the Greek context as well as adding to our knowledge of the English context. It is not the lack of democratic values (instead there are more humanitarian beliefs, as the Greek scholars state) but the lack of meaningful reforms and funding in research in the field of the day care centre that leaves the Greek society out of the notion of the participant child.

This review of literature demonstrates that there is a general movement and trend for changing how the children, their needs and learning are perceived. The majority of studies however (as will be shown in to the next chapter on methodology) are focused either on the child's perceptions, as being interpreted by adults in the video data, or on children over threes using a participatory or an ethnographic approach of 'at risk children' or children's

geographies. None of the studies has focused on toddlers' perspectives and their contribution to the planning of activities and on their own right to participate in the curriculum design in two countries such as Greece and England. Child participation in curriculum design is taken for granted and there is still much work to be done in this field especially with the youngest people. This question will be explored throughout this thesis.

## **Chapter 3.**

### **Methodology**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter aims to provide an outline and critical discussion of the methodology, methods and ethical issues related to the study. The aims, the research questions and the meaning of curriculum will be presented and the focus will be primarily on ethnography and participatory methods of research with children, highlighting issues related to the researcher's role, interpretation of data and possible limitations. The context of the settings will be outlined and the research design, the procedure and the methods will be described in detail.

#### **3.1 Aims, research questions and the meaning of 'curriculum'**

The purpose of this study is to investigate children's perspectives of the planning of activities in early years' education and care. Initially the intention was to explore how young children aged from one to three years old experience their lives in early years' settings. However, due to the classification of children into groups in each setting according to their age, the focus has been changed to children aged two and a half years to three years old.

A 'broad' meaning of the curriculum has been adopted. Vallberg Roth (2006: 79), for example, recommends that such an approach 'offers possibilities for analysis and comparing different types of pedagogically instructive and authoritative texts over time and for comparing the pedagogical guidelines for preschool and school'. This broader meaning of 'curriculum' is important due to the fact that before the reform of 1997 in the English case there was little public provision for under-three's and no official curriculum guidance. In addition, the use of FEK (ΦΕΚ) (the regulation documents of the public day care centres in Greece) are not pedagogical guidance but devolve values and ideas about children and their education and care in association with the administrative structure of the settings. Hence, the meaning of "curriculum" does not imply only the strict plan but also the values in connection with children's initiatives. The curriculum is understood as 'inclusive' (Hujala, 2002: 98) trying to see the child as actor, contributor and co-operator in the society. It is understood as being part of the community of practices and as such generates 'potential 'curriculum' with the broadest sense' (Lave and Wenger, 1991: 93).



Lave and Wenger (1991: 97) discuss the difference between a ‘learning curriculum’ and a ‘teaching curriculum’; a learning curriculum is ‘a field of learning resources in everyday practices *viewed from the perspective of learner*. A teaching curriculum, by contrast, is constructed for the instruction of newcomers’ (italics as the original). The former is based on participation as situating opportunities for learning and engagement while the later refers to participation after the request or encouragement of the instructor.

According to Bennett (2005) and Tobin (2005, 1995), each country has a different understanding of childhood, curriculum and way of working with young people. Hence through the whole analysis emphasis will be given to the principles and values, in association with the expectations (content and outputs), programme standards and pedagogical way of working, wherever needed, for the better understanding of both cases (Bennett, 2005). Additionally Bennett (2005: 7) argues that when considering the above elements the emphasis should not only be on the content and the methods used but also what he defines as orientation (governmental policies such as the form of curriculum, adequate training etc), structural (investments such as qualification, good condition of buildings, ratio etc) and interaction or procedural quality (relationship between the child and practitioner, adults and children themselves).

Consequently, the general objective of this study is to explore how young children can depict their experience of the early years’ setting and how adults can come to better understand their desires. The purpose is not to evaluate good or bad qualities in early year’s education and care, nor to see curriculum as a matter of quality (Dahlberg et al., 2007; Dahlberg and Moss, 2005). The purpose of this study is to find out children’s experience of different types of planned activities and to what extent they participate in the planning process actively. Hence the intention is to see children as co-researchers and active participants in the whole design and process.

Thus the following research questions were developed avoiding any assumptions and hypotheses and aiming to uncover the unpredictable and ‘rich child’ (Dahlberg and Moss, 2005; Rinaldi, 2006; Malaguchi, 1993):

1. What are children’s perspectives of the planned activities in early years’ settings (under 3 years old)?

2. When practitioners set up a framework of activities for children under three years old, how are children consulted?
  - Do children in this age group participate actively in the planning of activities and if so how does this happen?
  - How do children express their desires during the planning of activities?
  - How do practitioners encourage or discourage them?
  
3. Are children under three years old competent and able to express their desires during the planning of activities?
  - Do the children at this age of group always correspond to the adult's expectations?
  - If asked to inform planning will children give their own opinion or will they aim to please an adult?

Additionally this study aimed and expected to benefit as follows:

- To find out potentially different ways to listen to children under three years old
- To find out ways of listening to children that are adaptable to early years' settings and to certain extent to different cultures and countries.
- To investigate how children from two to three years old can be active agents and competent in their own lives.
- To find out how young children express their agency while they seem to be 'passive recipients' of the adults' arrangements.
- To find out new and innovative ways to work with children in the Organisation of Labour Union (OEE).
- To produce a framework for children in EY settings of OEE based on the idea of active participation in all aspects of their lives in the setting.
- To provide snapshots of children's lives in nursery school and reflect critically on the adult's role.

In order to find answers to these questions ethnography had been used as a main approach combined with participatory techniques. It has been chosen for two significant reasons. Firstly because 'ethnography means describing a culture and understanding a way of life from the point of view of its participants' (Punch, 2009: 124) and secondly the approach assists the researcher to understand participant's lives in a naturalistic situation (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995). Thus helping the researcher to understand not only

what the child is doing but also how they are doing it based on the child's point of view (James, 2007). The next section will explain further the reasons why ethnography is being recommended as a main approach in researching children's perspectives, while pitfalls will be examined through the whole section, in association with participatory methods.

### **3.2 Research with children**

#### *3.2.1 Ethnography*

Ethnography is used by sociologists in their effort to understand and look more deeply into people's experience in their daily lives (Emond, 2005). It is believed (Buchbinder, Longhofer, Barrett, Lawson and Floerch, 2006; Emond, 2005; Gallacher and Gallagher, 2008; James et al., 1998; James, 2007; Corsaro, 2005a; Siraj-Blatchford and Siraj-Blatchford, 2001) to be one of the most appropriate approaches in researching children's experience and listening to them (Warming, 2005). James (2007) lauds the contribution of ethnography in understanding children and their childhood differently in its own right. Goldman (2007: 25) states that ethnography is 'a description, interpretation and representation of what researchers experience'. In this respect Corsaro (2005a: 50) asserts that 'interactions and cultures are produced and shared in the present' and to this point interviews and the other methods are not able to find out the secret dynamic within children's lives. When the ethnographer becomes familiar with the participants' habits, kinship system, routines and rules they can understand their actions easier and capture events within the 'flow and the buzz' (James, 2007: 251) that otherwise would not be noticed.

For James (2007) the use of ethnography in research with children involves 'thick description' and as such, demands an interpretative commitment. The process of understanding and interpretation is prolonged but the researcher and the researched are involved within a variety of engagements which inevitably allow the use of diverse techniques. In the field of EYEC, Buchbinder et al. (2006) argue that the sociological and anthropological approaches engaged and linked children's lives with the broad socio-cultural phenomena. Mainly, ethnography using qualitative methods 'position the child care centre as a cultural reality embedded deeply in the social fabric of every-day life - for both children and their caregivers' (Buchbinder et al., 2006: 46), despite the fact that there are those who claim that very young children are excluded from the research process and more specifically from the anthropological and sociological field (Hirschfeld, 2002; James et al., 1998; Gottlieb, 2000; Buchbinder et al., 2006; James, 2007). Buchbinder et al.

(2006) state that the use of ethnography in settings is beneficial in understanding the micro and macro levels of the day care provision, acknowledging that the governmental policies, family and socio-cultural principles are fundamental in understanding the practice as a whole. Due to the strong relationship between family, caregivers, child and society, Buchbinder et al. (2006: 48) suggest that in the research process all the above factors should be taken into consideration and ethnography is a vital research approach to observe the participants in their naturalistic environment and not under 'experimentation and manipulation'.

Warming (2005: 51) suggests that 'participant observation', which is one of the basic tools of ethnography, gives adults many opportunities to listen effectively to children as it helps 'to learn about 'the other' by participating in their everyday life'. Corsaro (2005a: 55) asserts that there is a need of more 'child-centred' approaches in research with children where children could be like 'research assistants and informants' in the whole process. Therefore, in order for the adults to gain access, to become a member of the group and to understand children's daily life from their point of view, a long period of (participant) observation is necessary.

Children's culture is different from adults and many times the latter fails to recognise children's perspectives. For this reason, Eder and Corsaro (1999: 521) argue that for a researcher who conducts ethnographic research with children and as such, understands them under the notion of interpretative reproduction has to see ethnography as: 'sustained and engaged', 'microscopic and holistic' and 'flexible-self corrective'. 'Sustained and engaged' ethnography involves the researcher spending large amount of time with the participants. However, James (2007), Hammersley (2006) and Jeffrey and Troman (2004) argue that today ethnography has inevitably been changed as the researcher does not always spend a long time with the participants but also techniques such as audiovisual recordings are used extensively. It is believed (Emond, 2005; Corsaro, 2005a) that the use of audiovisual tools can (or may) restrict the researcher in the interpretation of non verbal communication, such as movements, facial expression, etc (Flewitt, 2006; Plowman and Stephen, 2008).

A particular challenge is the acceptance of the adult as a group member. Physical factors (such as the body size) and social factors (such as power and control) often prevent children from seeing the researcher as an 'atypical adult' (Corsaro, 2005a: 52; James, 2007; Russell, 2005). One of the techniques that Corsaro recommends is the 'reactive'

method (Corsaro, 2005a: 52) which means that the researcher enters into children's places and waits for them to permit participation in their activities. The same technique was also used by Emond (2005). This approach is different from what the typical researcher used to do but is time-consuming. Corsaro (2005a: 52) also mentioned that 'the incompetent, incomplete and in need of training' adult plays vital role in sharing power between researcher and children and many times is extended to the demystification of adult's knowledge (Corsaro and Molinari, 2008; Russell, 2005).

Russell (2005) also argues that in the same way the researcher intends to learn from the participants, participants would learn from the researcher. Ideally, the relationship should be reciprocal and asymmetrical - described by Rogoff (1990) as guided participation. The relationship needs to be based on intersubjectivity and as such, the status emerges from the interaction between the researcher and the researched. Hence some times the participant guides whilst at other times the researcher consults the participants to learn more. Ergun and Erdemir (2010) argue that the researcher cannot determine her status and position within the setting before entering, sharing and interacting with the participants. This interaction demands a relationship of rapport not only with the children but also with the practitioners (Russell, 2005) and as such the researcher needs to negotiate entry but also to keep balance with all the adults and children (Gordon et al., 2005). Further, Ergun and Erdemir (2010) argue that the ethnographer's role should be neutral, meaning that they cannot be a full 'insider' otherwise the researcher would have responsibilities similar to the insider which could lead to them being asked to represent the insider on some occasions. Such a stance could be harmful for both researcher and researched and may create many ethical issues. On the other hand, being an outsider could be dangerous for building up rapport. This rapport is 'delicate' (Ergun and Erdemir, 2010:27) and can be easily broken.

However, the 'at least adult role' (Mandell, 1991) that many researchers have discussed (Corsaro and Molinari, 2008; Emond, 2005; Christensen, 2004), is seen as problematic by James (2007), who is doubtful about how in the research process the researcher manages to be characterised as 'least adult'. The problem is that random coincidences may both destroy or build that relationship. As Warming (2005) asserts, the researcher does not have to adopt that role permanently once it happens, whereas sometimes this role is dependant on a child's character. There are children that accept that role, whereas some others are negative towards this approach. Warming (2005: 61) asserts that this process is more intuitive and she uses the term researcher in a 'child-like position' to differentiate her role from the normal adult.

Hence, my role within the settings was not clear. I was ‘Angeliki’ (English case) or ‘Miss Angeliki’ (in Greek case) although I had mentioned that I am not ‘Miss’, wanting to differentiate my position in relation to practitioner’s role, however this was the way that the practitioner had introduced me in both cases and it seems that children adapted to that (Swain, 2006). Although I always made it clear to the children that I had the position of the adult with fewer responsibilities than practitioners (Fasoli, 2003b) and in this way I had attempted to clarify the ‘boundaries between the researcher and researched’ (Russell, 2005:193). Swain (2004:208) discusses ‘the least –teacher role’. He points that the researcher who previously was a teacher in an educational setting can easily move swiftly between being more close to teachers or more close to children. He mentions that his previous occupation as a teacher helped him to build up rapport relationship between both staff and children while he needed to adopt a ‘series of multiple positioning towards the children’ in order not to reveal that he was a teacher (Swain, 2004: 209).

However, in my research I found that previously being a pre-school teacher can also work against the aims of the research as the staff may expect the researcher to behave more like a teacher rather than like a researcher. For instance, I experienced cases when the staff-child ratio was lower than normal and the practitioners counted on my presence as a member of staff. Consequently, adopting such a stance inevitably affected my relationship with the children and I was concerned they would not trust me anymore.

It seems, however, that my small height (Russell, 2005) and the fact that I ‘look younger than my actual age’ in association with my poor English (in the case of England) made the children interact with me differently. For instance, my small size in association with the use of a small camera was not intrusive for the children. This became clear when I was sometimes filming a child. When one of the practitioners came to look for the child, he would either cover his face feeling embarrassed or ask for the researcher to stop video filming. When the adult left, the child told me that I could continue. Of course for the children I was never perceived as a child (James, 2007). For instance, many times when I asked permission to enter into their play, the children in Greece said ‘No you cannot come because you are big!’, while children in England would not let me collect visual data from their hidden place (the tower). However, asking permission before collecting any data or entering into their play, was appreciated in both cases and it seems that it was a factor that helped children to see me as ‘not like a teacher’ as they could say ‘no’, negotiate or even exercise agency with me.

On the other hand, today in the field of education, ethnography may not be the same as it used to be in the past (Hammersley, 2006; James, 2007; Jeffrey and Troman, 2004). For instance, the duration is usually no more than one year whereas the observation is on a part time basis and in a limited spatial border (i.e. schools, work). Additionally, James (2007) argues that in ethnographic research with children, the focus has been changed. It is not looking only at what children are doing in their interaction with the adults but also how they learn. It is the new understanding of the child as a capable informant that demands a new understanding of ethnography. As James (2007) points out, it is significantly important where the focus of ethnography is. Therefore those who are conducting research with children in educational settings should always bear in mind that the structure of the settings involved may impact on the methods and process. Further, Gordon, Holland, Lahelma and Tolonen (2005: 128) argue that the ethnographer, when writing field notes, is in danger of missing events that are still and quiet because 'the practice of ethnography in schools, we argue, privileges the visible and audible'. Thus Gordon et al. (2005) recommended attention to both noisy and silent activities.

In the 'microscopic and holistic' meaning of ethnography Eder and Corsaro (1999) argue that the simple description of participants' actions is not enough in understanding their perceptions. What is needed is for the researcher to participate within the activities and get a better understanding from children's point of view. Participant observation has been recommended as such. Speaking about participant observation means that the adult participates in children's activities in the same way that they do, to a level that this is possible (Warming, 2005). Warming (2005) believes that in the exploration of how children's perspectives could be captured and the circumstances under which those beliefs could be interpreted are according to the ontological and epistemological stance of each researcher but in fact it is also a product of his capacity, dexterity and proclivity. She asserts that in participant observation, there are those who pay more attention to the observation from one part and those who focus more on what the participants do by becoming a member of the group, as in her study. She points out that in participant observation the researcher's role is not just to capture the events but also to write down their own feelings, thoughts and experience. This is actually viewed as a weakness from a positivist point of view, but may be seen as a strength from a more humanistic perspective and there is much debate about researcher objectivity in ethnography (Siraj-Blatchfold and Siraj-Blatchfold, 2001).

Warming (2005) recommends that if the researcher needs to perceive what the participants say, she can use the auditory and visual senses. However, if she wants to explore further what the child does, she needs to use her whole gamut of senses. She describes the process of 'listening with all senses' as akin to 'empathy' but to a certain point as 'reflection on the limits of empathy' (Warming, 2005: 56-57) for the reason that the researcher's experience of his own culture and the participant's culture predisposes the understanding. Warming (2005: 58) contends that participant observation could give a snapshot of 'the culture of kindergarten as a context for childhood' but the hardest part is not just to have access but for children to permit you to participate (Christensen, 2004; Corsaro, 2005a; Emond, 2005; Corsaro and Molinari, 2008). Similarly, Eder and Corsaro (1999) recommend the researcher to also pay attention to the frequency of the event, looking across all levels of the 'Orb Web' model (Corsaro, 2005b: 26).

For the 'flexible and self –corrective' meaning of ethnography, Eder and Corsaro (1999) argue that ethnography does not have a strict research design and as such, a researcher should be always ready to make changes according to the circumstances, challenging the techniques. As Hammersley and Atkinson (1995) state, there is no advice on how to go and conduct ethnography. Punch (1998) argues that the research design in ethnography may extend beyond parts of the initial or the whole design. What Eder and Corsaro (1999) contend is that ethnography cannot be framed as experimental research. For instance, Emond (2005: 124) noted that in ethnography there is no test 'hypotheses', whereas the researched phenomena are so flexible that it is not worthwhile to illuminate relationships between changeable situations (she uses the phrase 'establish a relationship between variables').

Additionally, this study aims to gain an ongoing understanding of learning about children's lives in EYEC and not to offer a fixed solution by recommending ways to improve practice. The aim is therefore to get a better understanding of children's lives by seeing a context that I was not familiar with (the English case) and then view differently a context which for me was previously unquestioned as a pre-school teacher (the Greek case). The intention is not to impose changes but to encourage practitioners to think differently about their practices. Hence, due to the fact that the main motivation for undertaking this study started from my personal concerns about the early years programmes that I had experienced as a preschool teacher and the fact that different cultures are involved in both the Greek and English cases, an ethnographic tradition is perhaps the most appropriate approach to follow.



Hammersley and Atkinson (1995) argue that a researcher could meet unpredictability in any setting connected with ethnographic study and as such 'all research is a practical activity requiring the exercise of judgment in context; it is not a matter of simply following methodological rules' (Hammersley and Atkinson, 1995: 23). This however does not mean that the researcher enters into the setting without any pre-planned framework. It just demands more flexibility and openness through all the stages of research.

Banister and Booth (2005) suggest that an ethnographer should always check what the limitations of asking the participants about their perspectives could be. For example Elliott and Jankel-Elliott, (2003) argued that the amount of time that people claim that they watch television is more than the reality, whereas in other cases they found that people too often do not 'remember what they did, let alone how they felt about it' (Elliott and Jankel-Elliott, 2003: 221). They argue that very often participants do different things from what they claim and believe, whereas some challenges exist to the ethnography itself. James et al. (1998) recommend 'task-centred activities'. The main aim of these techniques is to capture a child's perceptions based on their individual skills and interest. James (2007) argues that techniques such as tours, map making, picture taking, drawing, filling charts can form a visual representation of children's perceptions while at the same time they support researchers and children become more reflexive about the data collected. Additionally, the main intention to involve the participants as co-researchers in the whole process (James, 2007) as such, the researcher not standing out as passive observer, provokes the need for a combination of ethnography with participatory techniques. Hence, traditional ethnographic techniques, such as observation and interviews together with participatory methods are used in this study.

There are, however, some limitations in respect to whether the participants have a clear aspect of the objectives, the goals and the utilisation of the research and how the presence of the researcher influences the participant's behaviour (Elliot and Jankel-Elliot, 2003). To this end, two different approaches of ethnographic research with children will now be discussed; Emond (2005) and Warming (2005).

Emond (2005) tried to see how 12 and 18 year old young people experience their lives at home. Her initial methodological tool was interviewing but, after the children's encouragement she transformed to participatory observation, spending a long period of time in the children's houses experiencing the same routines as the children. In this way

she managed to gain children's active involvement in the design and choice of the participatory tool. At the same time this was for her an indicator that the children had understood the topic of the research and confirmed their willingness to participate. The whole negotiation with children about the clarification, the real purposes and the possible methods used she believed posed the researcher in a different position from normal adult-child relationship, in the children's eyes. According to Emond (2005), this factor clearly led the children to give her permission to conduct the research.

Warming (2005), on the other hand, explored children's perspectives in early year's education and care and how they illuminated their life in the pre-school. She used participant observation with a particular emphasis on participation without having involved children in the whole process of the research, in contrast to Alderson's (2000) recommendations that the children should participate actively in all phases of the research from the design until the analysis of data. Warming apologetically said that in her study, the purpose, the design, the questions and the methodological tools have been decided by herself and to some extent the children were not aware of her identity or of the purpose of the study. She believes that although it is less ethical there are doubts as to what extent it is ethical to involve children with information that may not be directly important for them. She states that children should have the information that they need and ask for.

Reflecting on her study Emond (2005) suggests that the children, in their effort to cooperate in the research process, lose their natural response. Emond (2005) describes an event when two children had an argument and suddenly stopped to ask the researcher if it was too fast and if she would like them to repeat it again. Here it is questionable to what extent an adult aiming to achieve the 'at least adult role' and to understand children's experience manages finally to explore young people's lives without placing them under more pressure.

Warming (2005: 63) noted that children are more 'acting people' and less 'talking people' and once the adults try to get into their world they realise this and in their peer relationship are working in the different way. Hence, whenever their verbal responses were limited to a few or no words it was a result of their way of communication with others. For this reason Warming asserts that participant observation is one of the most effective tools in researching children's experience but in her study she found it difficult to interpret and analyse the data trying to be more objective and less subjective. Her concerns were both ontological and epistemological. Thus, from the ontological point asserting that children's

diversity is reflected in the fact that what is valuable and significant for one child may not be for another. Additionally, children's perspectives are changeable in the same way that adults adopt different stances and perceptions under the influence of social, biographical and cultural events. Looking at the epistemological part, she asserts that a researcher is part of society and the interpretation of the data depends to a certain extent on the researcher's own experience. Eder and Corsaro (1999) recommend reflexivity and self correction through the whole process from the methods until the data analysis and the theory used.

Despite all the above limitations, ethnography is a comprehensive approach well adapted to the needs of the child. It helps all those who are responsible in the EY setting to capture a more in depth understanding of children's culture, engaging in a reciprocal relationship. However, the researchers must always bear in mind that child's daily routines, caregiver's relationship, emotional commitments, transition period, communicational style and culture are all part of a better understanding of young peoples' perspectives, while EY settings are places for social reproduction and enculturation.

### *3.2.2 Participatory Methods as part of Ethnography*

Within the field of early childhood there has recently been a great deal of interest in participatory research influenced by the popular 'Mosaic approach' (Clark and Moss, 2001; 2005). However, it will be argued that, despite the recent popularity of these tools in research aiming at eliciting children's perspectives, the method should not be considered uncritically. This section will therefore draw attention to the pitfalls and methodological dilemmas arising from the use of participatory tools in research with young children. Thus, problematising the unquestionable acceptance of 'participatory' tools and critically examining the complex relationship between attitudes, values and tactics around participatory techniques with young children.

The 'Mosaic approach' is defined by Clark and Statham (2005: 46) as: 'a multi-method framework to help young children gather material about the important details of their daily lives and to share these with adults' and was created, in part, to address a perceived absence of young children's perspectives from early childhood research. The Mosaic approach is first and foremost about how to find children's voices ('how to listen') and is guided by the principle of children as 'experts and agents in their own lives' (Clark, 2005a: 30). The name 'Mosaic' 'reflects the bringing together of different pieces of information or material to make a picture from children's viewpoint' (Clark and Statham (2005: 47). The method uses both, the traditional tools of interviewing (practitioners and parents),

observing children at play and a variety of 'participatory tools' with children. These include taking photographs, book making, tours of setting and the outdoor area and map making. Clark (2004) argues that early years practitioners using the Mosaic approach have the possibility of capturing the small details of children's lives and that participatory tools such as cameras enhance and promote children's competence to communicate with each other and adult awareness of the complication of children's daily lives.

As Clark and Statham (2005) state, for children under five years old there are few studies about their experience due to the fact that there are concerns about 'how to listen' to very young children (Clark and Statham, 2005: 45; Clark, 2005). Also, studies with slightly older children tend to be based on traditional techniques. Clark and Statham (2005) state that the limited number of studies with very young children is not only a consequence of the lack of techniques of how to make research with them but also a product of the general beliefs about their abilities. The Mosaic approach is searching for children's voices about their world and is based on the idea that what is important for adults may not be for children (Clark and Statham, 2005).

Gallacher (2008: 139) terms participatory techniques as 'a diverse set of techniques bound together by a common concern for actively involving research subjects in the construction of data'. There is however an ongoing debate about whether researchers should use tools adapted for different ages of children or not. There are those in favour of the argument that there are no appropriate age related tools (see for instance Christensen and James, 2008; Thomson, 2007) whereas others argue that 'it is ridiculous to claim that an infant has the same kind of understanding of the world as does a teenager.... so it is essential for a researcher to adjust their mode of enquiry' (Greene and Hill, 2005: 8). Clearly, in many western countries some children from around the age of two may well have experienced the use of some participatory techniques such as drawings, games or using of cameras at home, or in the settings and be well capable of using them to record and discuss images.

A number of recent studies have also started to highlight a range of other issues concerning the use of cameras as 'participatory' tools. Punch (2002), for example, researched children's everyday lives in rural Bolivia using a variety of data collection tools, including drawings, photographs, diaries, worksheets and participatory rural appraisal techniques (PRA). Cameras were given to 37 children between 8 -14 years of age asking them to depict important aspects of their lives. Punch (2002) argues that, whilst spontaneous events of the moment appear to have influenced the children's pictures, researchers should be

particularly careful in their selection and emphasis of the significance of visual data. Additionally, she found that in the use of visual data there are usually significant differences between what people say and what they do, and therefore proposed observation as a means of balance.

Einarsdóttir's research (2005) identified a further dilemma. Her project in Iceland investigated five and six year old children's experience of playschool. Einarsdóttir highlighted differences between photographic data collected with and without adult surveillance, therefore suggesting that adult presence may have a significant effect on the use of the camera as a participatory tool. Under these circumstances it is questionable whether asking children to undertake a specific task is reliable or not. Also, the work of Cook and Hess (2007) found that, whilst the use of photos generally helped children to discuss and to express their feelings more deeply, the tool also encouraged children to focus specifically on the subject identified by the researcher. Cook and Hess argued that each time the adults tried to direct children there were fewer opportunities for their involvement to flourish.

Further exposition of the process of using photographic images to elicit children's perspectives through discussion of the image is provided by Smith, Duncan and Marshall (2005) and Punch (2002). Smith et al. (2005) studied 27 four year old children's perspectives of their own learning in five early years settings using a range of methods including photographs, observation, interview (with teachers, parents and children). They reported that the photographs, especially when children were depicted in them, sparked off children's interest for further discussion. However, they identified a problem in the process of discussion, especially in group interviews. Although the group interview reminds children of events that they may have forgotten, quite often there are difficulties in illumination of rules. Punch (2002) also viewed adult directed group discussions as problematic, especially in the classroom. Punch argues that details significant to children are often missed out. As a result, Smith et al. (2005) found that interviews together with peers made children more confident to speak, as there was common interest in shared experience and the children encouraged each other. As Smith et al. (2005: 485) argue 'children clearly have something useful and important to say about their activities and have the competence to tell us if we provide them with the appropriate scaffolding'.

Stephenson (2009), doing research with children from two to four years old, used the photographs in four different ways; taken by researcher inside and outside of the EY

settings, pictures taken by researcher of the pedagogical corner (as Wiltz and Klein, 2001, for example, pictures taken by children during the tours (as the example of Moss and Clark, 2001, 2005) and pictures of the personal portfolios of children. These different group of pictures have been used a basis to discuss children's perceptions about the curriculum. Despite the fact she found that all these strategies to engage children in talking about their life in the centre, in fact it was significantly important to adopt a 'step back' approach (Stephenson, 2009: 137), while she found that the pictures taken by the researcher were not always guaranteed to be according to child's perception.

The selected studies above demonstrate the increasing popularity of the use of participatory tools in research with children. However, in considering how the use of participatory tools can be used successfully as a means to elicit children's perspectives, a number of significant issues arise. Russell (2005) argues that strictly pre-planned research design is not ideal before entering in the settings and actually that was a challenge for me. During my pilot study, following the example of Wiltz and Klein (2001), (that has been also used by Stephenson, 2009) and showing pictures of the organized activities as a daily diary for children to show me their perspectives, I found myself feeling disappointed and trying to regulate children to my research agenda. What I received back was for children to grasp the stickers, or the stamp I had provided them with, grasp the A4 poster and run away, while soon after I found it torn. The children's focus was not on the poster but on the process of using as many as stickers they could or putting stamps wherever they could. The comment in my research diary was rather desperate 'Why do participatory tools not work for me? What have I done wrong?' I decided not only to 'step back' as described by Stephenson but also on 'leaving aside' all my research agenda based on participatory techniques. However, it was my background as a pre-school teacher that had trapped me, expecting children to act as if being in the Early Years setting while my role was different. The A4 posters were based on the pictures of the day care centre and the program was according to activities that as a pre-school teacher I had used extensively in the past.

A number of problems in interpretation, representation, generalisation and researcher's subjectivity, ethics and epistemology of participatory techniques have been noted by many writers (Campbell, 2002; Gallacher, 2008, Murray, 2005; Waller, 2007; Einarisdóttir, 2007). Campbell (2002) argues that the popularity of these techniques impels a capacity to produce data in a short period but without considering the limitations of the chosen sample (Murray, 2005). Banister and Booth (2005) admit that in the interpretation of the data based only on the researcher's subjectivity there is serious concern, while Christensen

(2004) and Penn (2005) also argue that a researcher's childhood memories may influence the research process. As Banister and Booth (2005: 165) state, 'childhood is experienced by everyone, and is therefore, part of everyone's experiences, and inevitably the researcher's own experiences were drawn on through reflexive engagement'.

Campbell (2002) also argues that in the group-interview process the researcher cannot control what really influences participants' perspectives. Moreover, the social homogeneity, the size of the group, peer relationships are issues that should be taken seriously into consideration in connection with the role of the moderator in group-interview, otherwise the validity of the data may be effected (Emond, 2005; Hammersley, 2006).

Additionally, Christensen (2004) states that not only may the research topic not be according to children's interests but sometimes children can guess the researcher's questions and answers according to what he wants to hear and not what they really believe ('pedagogic voice' Arnot and Reay, 2007). Christensen (2004) therefore argues that the issue of power in research with children has been misunderstood. The power should not be seen in people's position but in the research process and in 'social representation'. Thus there is connection between children's representation and children's participation. Gallacher (2008) argues that power should not be seen only as an adult's possession but as an action that an individual can act upon. As such both adults and children can exercise power.

Furthermore, the digital camera or the video are not part of children's social life (Gallacher and Gallacher, 2008) and there is a question (from the researcher's perspective) concerning the extent to which children will view these tools as objects for play and amusement (O' Kane, 2008; Banister and Booth, 2005). Stephenson (2009), for example, mentions problems in her research with children getting used to digital cameras and for this reason she decided to control the use of cameras, determining the number of pictures each child could take. Also, she did not bring the camera with her on every visit to the setting as some children wanted to use it extensively, which she felt placed obstacles to her research agenda. It seems that understanding children's culture is very important in conducting research with children. The different cultures (adult's culture – children's culture) may lead to different understandings and as such a false interpretation of the data from the adult's point of view (Campbell 2002; Fasoli, 2003). The use of digital cameras, as will be described in the methods section, relates to both the need for the children to be trained in

how to use it and also ‘interpretative reproduction’ (Corsaro, 2005a). Children need time and space to come to terms with what has been introduced by the researcher and to experiment with it first and then use it as a participatory tool.

For Gallacher and Gallagher (2008) the assumption that research undertaken *with* children and not *on* children leads to the notion that the whole project is without adult influence is an illusion. Fasoli (2003a: 11) argues that there is an ‘unstated assumption’ within the research process that should not be underestimated. She contends that, it is an ongoing process going beyond a simple familiarisation with the tools. Furthermore, Gallacher and Gallagher (2008) state that the domination of these approaches also reflects the fact that the purposes, the assumptions, the methods and values have been definitely determined and invented by adults and not by children.

Gallacher and Gallagher (2008) argue that through participatory methods, firstly adults encourage children to produce knowledge. The claim is problematic as if children need adults to be empowered for exercising agency in their life. They found that children to a certain point work and react independently and some times contradictory to adult’s expectations and desires. Secondly, despite the fact that researchers usually design and organise their participatory methods carefully, they always appear surprised when children act in a non-predicable way and beyond the borders of the research limits (Alderson, 2000; Fasoli, 2003a; Thomson, 2007; Waller and Bitou, forthcoming).

Gallacher and Gallagher (2006: 3) recommend the term appropriation or manipulation instead of the narrow ‘participation’. They argue that ‘participation’ is not an appropriate term as long as the researcher puts children ‘on-task’ after long discussion and negotiation about the use of the tools and the purposes of the research (as in case of Emond, 2005). There are certain limitations and rules to the whole process. Based on the meaning of interpretative reproduction (Corsaro, 2005a) and guided participation (Rogoff, 1990), as long as the researcher enters a setting and undertakes research they will come to learn something. However, the researcher brings with her some artefacts (different ways of talking, research techniques, different ideas, aims of the research, etc) that inevitably will be incorporated into the routine of the setting and change it. Thus it could be argued that the real meaning of the participation of the child in the research should be seen as space where the child can effect changes within the research design.



Thus Gallacher and Gallagher (2008) argue that while the use of the disposable cameras is a fairly popular method it is not always participatory. Children can exercise agency with the camera but without always using it as a participatory tool. They can use the disposable camera in a number of different ways. Firstly, they may take pictures because they are really interested in a topic or an object and at the same time they may be really willing to discuss and explain to the researcher the reasons why they took these pictures. Secondly, children may take the pictures in order to satisfy the researcher or to imitate their friends. Emond (2005: 128) calls this phenomenon ‘intra-group power’. Thirdly, at other times children may take many pictures without giving any explanation. Fourthly, children may ask a friend or an adult to take a picture for them, or of them. Finally, they may decline to use the camera at all.

According to Banister and Booth (2005), the same activities are not appropriate for all children, as some of them may want to express themselves in a different way. In all of the above possibilities it appears that children are exercising agency, however there are differences between agency and participation. Agency goes beyond the research techniques. Children react to the techniques in any way ‘as active agents, they can’ (Gallacher and Gallagher, 2006: 3) but ‘empowering’ should be seen from the adult’s point of view and as a way of gathering data that traditional techniques may not allow.

First of all, it is argued here that participatory tools cannot automatically enable children’s participation. Using only participatory techniques and for a short period would have restricted children to specific activities and regulated the children to my own research agenda. It is the ongoing research design and the relationship with the child that determines participation and involvement (Waller and Bitou, 2011), while many challenges can be found in the interpretation of the data based on the adults’ point of view (Bitou and Waller, 2011). First of all the researcher has to be accepted by the children to enter into their group. Secondly if the children are busy with their own agenda they may not be interested in contributing to producing research data, however they are aware of the adult’s presence and the role that plays within the setting. The researcher’s agenda inevitably changes children’s experience but there is an ‘uneven and interchangeable power’ (Waller and Bitou, 2011) between the child and the researcher as the adult is never sure about child’s responses. Simultaneously, the lack of ability to predict a child’s comments automatically leads to implications in interpretation of data from the adult’s point of view. Therefore, the benefit of ethnography is that it provides researchers with more opportunities to interact with children and provide children with an environment to interact in their own way

without being directed by the researcher (Hess and Cook, 2007). This approach is found to sustain child's interest further (Hess and Cook, 2007; Gallacher and Gallacher, 2008; Gallacher, 2005). On the other hand participatory methods should be used as extended techniques of the ethnography and not as a replacement for it (Gallacher and Gallacher, 2008; Waller and Bitou, forthcoming). In this context a researcher seeks 'a particular form of detachment by avoiding adult roles of authority' (Eder and Corsaro, 1999: 527).

### **3.3 Methods**

An ethnographic case study took place over six months in England (2008) and six months in Greece (2009). Two settings were selected - a Sure Start Children's Centre in England and a nursery school in Greece belonging to the Organisation of the Labour Union (OEE), where I am a civil worker. England was chosen for the research because of the existence of a curriculum framework for children under three, firstly Birth to Three Matters (Sure Start, 2002) and from September 2008 the Early Years Foundation Stage (DfES, 2007). In comparison, in Greece there is no official programme for children under three. In this way the intention is to compare how children experience their lives with or without an official curriculum framework. The study involved a sample of seven children from Greece and seven from England aged 2.5 to 3 years old who were randomly selected as the Table 3.1 (below) shows. In the table, the number of children participating with their pseudonymous together with their age in years and months at the start of the study is displayed. From the total number of children, three children from each country were selected to be analysed in depth. This selection was not intended to exclude the rest of the group but their perspectives are reported through their involvement with the three protagonists from each country. For instance Maria is one of the main protagonists in the Greek case. However, as a close friend of Aspasia, very often through the events reported and analysed Aspasia's perception is reported as well. A similar situation occurred in the English case. For instance Ian very often was involved in the activities with Allan.

**Table 3.1 .Sample of children who participated in the study**

<b>Number of children participating in years and months</b>							
<b>Greek case</b>				<b>English Case</b>			
Christos	2. 9	Dafni	2.7	Jennifer	2. 12	Stefanie	2. 6
Panayiotis	2. 9	Aspasia	2.9	Ian	2. 10	Sindy	2. 6
Maria	2. 11	Anastasios	2. 9	Allan	2. 8	Arthur	2.5
Eleni	2.9			Sandra	2.9		
Total number: 7 (total classroom)				Total number: 7 (from those who attended more often)			

### **3.3.1 Context**

In England, the day care centre was part of the Sure Start programme in a suburban part of the West Midlands which was economically deprived. Children and families could attend a range of Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) and health programmes on a drop in, or daily basis. Generally, ECEC in the setting was organised into two groups of children, the crèche where children under two could attend and the toddlers' room where children from 2 until 4 years attended. The research took place in the toddlers group where, on average 10 to 20 children attended every day. There was a small group of children who attended everyday while the majority of children were different every day. The ratio between staff and children was 1 to 4 although this was often supplemented by a range of volunteers. Each session took place from 9:30 am to 12 noon.

The Greek setting was organised and administered by the OEE organisation which provides free ECEC for children aged 8 months to 6 years ( from 2010 until 4 years old) old whose parents have a low income and both received IKA insurance (Social Security Organisation in Greece). The location of this day care centre was in a city in the northern part of the country. The day care centre is divided into classes according to children's age: infant classes-βρεφικό (8 months to 2 years old), toddler classes-μεταγραφικό (2 years old to 3 years old), pre- kindergarten classes-προνήπια (3 years old to 4 years old) and kindergarten classes-νηπιαγωγείο (4 years old to 6 years old). The research for this project was with seven children (aged 2:5 to 3 years old) who all attended on a daily basis from 7 am until 4 pm. In the group at the beginning of the academic year there were two practitioners and one assistant while after Christmas this changed to one practitioner and one assistant.

In both cases all the participant children had been attending the setting before the research started and have a ‘joint history with the teacher’ (Rutanen, 2007: 65) working together for more than one year (some children were 3 weeks old when first came in the day care centre). Also, the staff in the settings share the same history in both cases. Thus the sample of this study had ‘the history of co-adjustment’ among children and staff, a term used by Rutanen (2007: 65) to emphasise the significance of both children and practitioners experiencing the same routines, habits, events and codes of communication. Therefore the children and practitioners had already shaped and jointly constructed aspects of meaning within the specific settings, dealing together with the same events while at the same time they have their own expectations and points of view related to their interests and personal history. In this way the children already had a perspective of the setting and programme while practitioners and other staff in the setting are aware of the characteristics and personality of each child. Also, in an ethnographic study it was seen as essential for the researcher (who is a qualified and experienced early years practitioner) to integrate into the normal routines of the setting so that she learned the habits and the rules of the daily programme in order to limit her impact on activities and respect children’s privacy.

The general planning is described in the following Tables 3.2a and 3.2b. However, it should be pointed out here that the general routines in the settings were not similar to the children’s routines. Especially in the English case, the routines were personal for each child and were interrelated with their personal interests. This was an issue that was not been predicted in the initial research design. Hence in the observations and later analysis the activities were classified as: adult directed and child directed, and in the English case, indoor and outdoor.

**Table 3.2a - The daily programme in the setting in England**

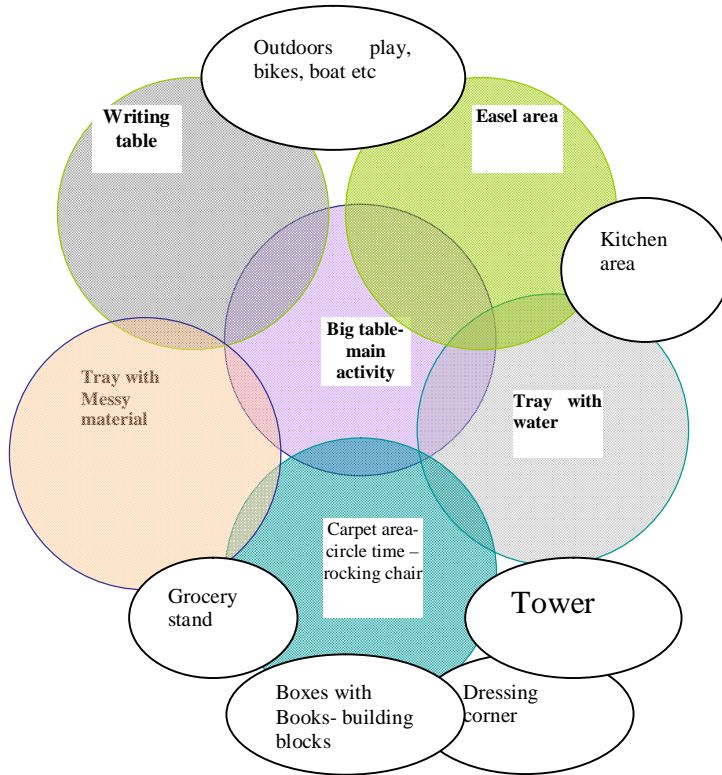
9:00 - 9:30	Practitioners prepare the corners. Children arrive all together with their parents
9:30 - 10:00	Playing in the pre-arranged corners until practitioners announce “tidy up time”
10:00 - 10:30	Circle time – singing time (the songs were the same on all visits)
10:30 - 10:45	Snack time
10:45 - 11:00	“Free play” waiting for everybody to finish the snacks to go outside
11:00 - 11:30	Outdoor play in the garden
11:30 - 11:50	Indoor free play, or involved in activities that the staff organised on the main big table

11:50 - 12:00	“Time to say good bye”. The door opens and parents come in to pick the children up
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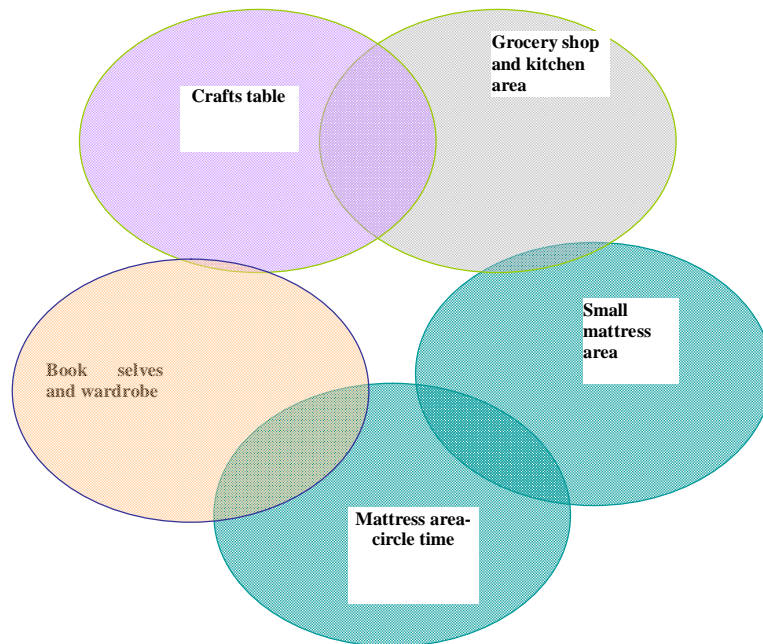
**Table 3.2 - The daily programme in the setting in Greece**

7:00 - 9:00	Children’s arrival in the foyer. All groups of children are playing in the same area
9:00 - 9:30	Breakfast (common area -foyer)
9:30 - 10:00	Circle time (classroom)
10:00 - 10:30	Craft time or group play, or rhythmic and dancing, free play
10:30 - 10:45	Fruit time (common area-foyer)
10:45 - 11:00	Back to the classroom- free play in the corners
11:15 - 11:45	Group play or craft or rhythmic activities –or free play
11:45 - 12:00	Preparing for lunch
12:00 - 12:30	Lunch time
12:30 - 1:00	Reading a story on the mattress, waiting for parents to come and pick them up while they are drawing or playing with plasticine. Closing at 4:00 (from 1pm to 4pm children are gathering in foyer together with practitioners from the other groups as the staff change shift and children are waiting for their parents to pick them up)

The following Figures 3.3 and 3.4 show how the programmes are spatially represented within the organised activities. From the tables and figures it is becomes apparent how simple the Greek programme is and it also lacks accessible areas.



**Figure 3.3 Spatial representation of the programme in the setting in England**



**Figure 3.4 Spatial representation of the programme in the setting in Greece.**

### 3.3.2 Procedure

Murray (2005: 63) describes three phases in doing research with children; engage gatekeepers, engage children and data collection. Russell (2005) argues that in research with children a researcher has to build a relationship not only with children but also with the practitioners. Firstly, visits were planned to the settings to discuss the aims and the purpose of the research with the members of staff, contact with parents and finally with children (for further information see the section on ethics).

For the purpose of the study, it was worthwhile before starting the actual research to become more familiar with children and their interests, to observe them and to have access to individual records in the centre where appropriate (Corsaro, 1990, 2003, 2005a). For instance, it is important to be aware about whether children have other ECEC experience before attending the setting and for how long, their exact age, whether they have another sibling that attended the same centre, etc. Additionally, it is important to know how many hours they attend the setting for. Gaining appropriate information about a child through a member of staff children can be protected from any sensitive and emotional events that may make them feel upset (Hill, 2005; Alderson and Morrow, 2004). In this research I was concerned about being particularly careful not to start any discussion with children which could be painful or distressing for them. For this reason, discussion with the manager and practitioners took place before starting the research and during and after the collection of the data.

The review of literature (Corsaro, 2003; Wiltz and Klein, 2001) indicated that children may feel bored during circle time. For this reason, and due to the fact that 'circle time' is an adult directed activity, it was worthwhile to video this activity systematically and on every visit. Wiltz and Klein, (2001: 229) state that 'the longer the time spent in child care, the more knowledgeable children become about the social context' and as long as children have experienced staying in child care it is more easily for them to make comparisons between the different settings and they can explain their preference. Wiltz and Klein (2001) believed that comprehensive observation gives a thick description of what happens in the setting. However, the exploration of what is really happening in the setting needs more time and further tools to enable an in-depth examination. They also point out that it is really worthwhile for children to have previously experienced other types of day care services so as to be able to make the comparison. However, not all children and parents had that experience.

It was also worthwhile to spend some time just making unstructured narrative observations in the setting for me to get used to the habits and rules in the daily programme in order for my entrance to be less intrusive into the normal programme and activities. The period after February until July (three days per week, English case) and November to April (three days per week, Greek case) was chosen to be the period of actual research due to the fact that children would have experienced the curriculum-framework for at least two months. The routines and the directed and non-directed activities would have been already determined while, generally, children will have had chance to become used to the transition from home to early years' setting.

This study can be characterised as ethnographic research combined with participatory methods focussing on one case in England and one case in Greece. There are variations of case study research. Case studies are an important element in ethnographic approach however I am simply using case studies to employ my ethnographic approach. It is all part of a coherent strategy. As such in this thesis it is the case of England and the case of Greece that are examined through the ethnographic approach. Initially, it was not determined if the research would be participant observation or not or if it would use participatory methods or not because this was dependent on the children's wishes (Corsaro, 2005a, 2003). Goldman-Segall (1998), as with Corsaro, states that when the researcher is in a standby situation waiting for the children to take the initiative to start the collaboration, a stronger sense of mutuality is created. All the tools were transparent to children which means that children have the chance to experiment with them, to touch them, to play and decide not to use them (Flewitt, 2005; Goldman-Segall, 1998). The most idealistic purpose was for children to take control of what they wanted to collect and report as data. For this reason, the tools needed to be flexible and adaptable to all children's needs, without excluding them from any step of the research as long as they are willing to participate. This means that I had a number of potential methods of data collection that I wished to trial to see the children's reactions

### *3.3.3 A Detailed description of data collection and implications*

This study draws on the framework for listening to young children – the multi-method 'Mosaic approach' described by Clark and Moss (2001 and 2005). The approach uses both the traditional tools of observing children at play and a variety of 'participatory tools' with children. These include taking photographs and various 'participatory games'. Firstly, data collection starts with the researcher doing observation then children using digital photographs and film to record their perspectives. Not all documentation and images are



published and sometimes an adult may take the photographs or video film, which may or may not be at the direction of the child (Waller, 2007). All the interviews were recorded, transcribed and translated by the researcher who is bilingual in English and Greek.

For this study a range of ‘participatory’ methods were used including data gathered through video recordings made by both children and adults which involved tools such as ‘Digital blue’ video cameras, digital cameras and walking tours with or without video. In addition, the researcher and children designed some participatory methods such as building blocks, telephone discussion and the ‘Guess what I like’ game.

**Table 3.3 Participatory methods**

<b>Participatory Methods</b>	
<b><u>What has been provided by the researcher</u></b>	<b><u>What is given by the Children</u></b>
<b>Digital blue camera/ digital camera :</b> children are taking pictures and videos (Clark and Moss, 2001, 2005)	<b>Walking with or without video tours:</b> children invited researcher to follow them by driving or not their bikes (England with bikes and wheelbarrow, Greece by walking)
<b>Tours:</b> Researcher invites children to show her what they enjoy the most (the English case did not work while in Greek case the findings were significantly different in comparison with the child’s directed tour)	<b>Building blocks:</b> Children invited researcher to join them and depict on her data constructions of their favourite toys such as bike./ or children invited researcher to play with them cooking with building blocks
<b>Treasure basket:</b> children were asked to put in a box items that are important for their life in the day care centre (only in Greece).	<b>Treasure basket:</b> The idea came from children in England driving trolleys and wheelbarrows and putting into the baskets items that are playing the most (English case).
<b>Routine Cards:</b> (English case) it is a group of cards used by practitioners to remind the routines and the next task for children. It was based on Makaton system and has been used in the English case due to children’s familiarity.	<b>Telephone discussion:</b> Children invite researcher to take part in a telephone discussion talking about issues important for their life or child is calling the researcher and they are talking through the telephone.
	<b>Guess what I like game:</b> researcher has been asked by children to guess what the child likes and enjoy the most (Greek case).

However, what should be mentioned at this point is that the initial research design was aimed to focus on children’s contribution by determining both those techniques applied by children and those introduced by the researcher. An initial question was whether or not

participant observation should be used. The question highlighted the whole process as the adult is never aware of whether or not permission will be given to her by the children. Hence the above Table 3.3 showing the participatory methods aims to demonstrate how during the ethnographic research the methodological techniques have been appropriated by the children and made part of their experience (Goldman-Segall, 1998).

#### *3.3.4 Observation – Participant or non-participant?*

Observation in this study was through keeping daily field notes and video filming or by participating in an activity when the child indicated that it was desirable and afterwards field notes were written. Hence the observation was both participant and non-participant. In participant observation the researcher's role within the research is varied depending on the situation (Yin, 2003). This diverse role offers many opportunities to capture knowledge that otherwise may not be available by participating in events such as a game or discussion that has been organised by children themselves and has not been asked for by the researcher. Additionally, the role of 'insider' is particularly important as an event can be explained from the child's point of view giving a more precise and accurate information. However, this method is not unproblematic. Yin (2003: 94) notes that accessibility is not always guaranteed, while the researcher could easily become biased simply because she is not just an observer any more. As long as a researcher becomes part of the group she may find that she does have the time to take detailed notes and be reflective at the time of involvement. Additionally during participant observation a researcher could be involved in one event but may miss another one (Yin, 2003; Plowman and Stephen, 2008).

Observation is one of the most appropriate methods when the sample is not large (Flewitt, 2006). However, a researcher's subjectivity can easily be depicted in the choice of the methods, theory and texts used. Additionally, subjectivity can also be found in the determination of what is filmed and observed. Plowman and Stephen (2008: 546), for example, argue that 'the danger for researchers is that such decisions about where to locate the focus of attention are made instantaneously, judgements are not made explicit and moments cannot be recaptured if they are missed'. Thus, the researcher should critique the theory that has been chosen and the methods used (Flewitt, 2006; Dahlberg and Moss, 2005; Lenz Taguchi, 2010).

However, the use of different methods to record the same activity gives a deep portrayal of the data. Different representation creates different paths of understanding and different 'truth' (Flewitt, 2006), while the high level of children's mobility demands that the

researcher has an effective instrument to depict each detail that an event can offer (Plowman and Stephen, 2008). Although, the event that is captured is always 'partial' (Plowman and Stephen, 2008) and although the researcher is not on the video in fact is behind and it can be understood by the quality of the video itself (Plowman and Stephen, 2008). Adults are passing in front of the camera, voices on the background. Sometimes the researcher is trying not to talk loudly on the video when the child's requests or showing something. The researcher in that case is answering by making gestures, smiling, facial expressions, getting even stress if the child is in danger that only the unstable picture can reveal it. Sometimes the focus of the lens is also going to another direction simply because researcher at that moment has captured another event in the background or a child is asking for help.

Initially, I was concerned about the quality of the video films recorded but seeing them again at home I realised that the naturally occurring video was helping me to also see the role I was playing with the children. As for a researcher's subjectivity, a 'Reflexive Diary' (Flewitt, 2006: 35; Emerson et al., 2007) and the video itself have been used. Hence the video observation facilitates the analysis of child's perceptions in association with the activities during the moment that it is taking place. Allowing the child and the researcher to review the video instantly and make comments. It also facilitates practitioners' reflections, as they could see the video within the same day or during the interview process for assisting their observation. It facilitates a researcher's subjectivity and observation process and it is a tool for future meta-analysis and further interpretation.

Through keeping notes on an every day basis the researcher can recognise how her beliefs are interwoven into the text (Emerson et al., 2007). The Reflective Diary works as a filter into researcher beliefs. This also was one of the reasons why the transcription of the visual data occurred without any software. The reflection in the diary took place at two levels. The first level was the same day that the field note was recorded.

I went to the setting each day with a note book keeping notes, taking video and used the 'participatory' tools. Returning home, I kept a detailed diary for each day organised together with the visual data and stored in the same file. The length of the written diary was around 10 to 15 pages for every day. This kind of detailed diary is particularly helpful as the researcher cannot initially predict the importance of a single event. For instance, in the first section about the wolf theme, it would become clear how an event that initially seems to be not important takes a different meaning when it is examined in relation with

other events. The Greek field notes were written both in the English and Greek language. The dialogues are written in Greek so as the researcher did not lose the meaning. At the same time they were translated into English. A similar process was undertaken during the transcription of the audiovisual data.

The second phase of the reflective diary is during the transcription. It was based on what Stern (2004) has termed 'present moment'. During the transcription the researcher writes down the feelings that the video data evokes and afterwards checks the old diary reflecting on the comments and comparing them respectively. This double reflectivity was important. As Edwards (2001: 123) argues that for those researchers who are from the field of early years education and are primarily practitioners, reflexivity has further implications as it 'demands the capacity to separate oneself from the field of study and gain the distance that allows a fresh examination of familiar events'. For this reason the first phase of the study started from England as a context that I was not familiar with at all.

Flewitt (2006:42) states that multimedia methods give rich details of the 'peripheral participation' (Lave and Wenger, 1991) which presents how children are involved in different stages of participation into an activity, starting from peripheral to more rigorous actions, or how some children create an activity but do not get into the collective exchange. The linking of visual, audio and written techniques offers an interesting insight into interaction in the setting. However Flewitt states that there are pitfalls in the use of different techniques. The debate is whether different methods investigate the same topic and what kind of links could be found in the data gathered.

Therefore in this study, observation took place through:

- Video: using a small digital camera, organised and not organised activities of the day were filmed. Some of the activities were directed like 'circle time' some others were depicted after children invitation during their play. All the directed activities of the day were video filmed in the Greek case while in the English case the focus was on the activity the child was choosing to go and get involved in.
- Field notes (in the class from 9 am to 12 am, three days per week within 6 months for each case)
- Personal diary at home (after every visit)

Through the observation this study initially aimed to investigate how children experience the planned activities in the settings and then to triangulate those findings with the other methodological tools. There are three steps to this process:

***Exploratory step*** (Silverman, 2005): just observe and gain an insight of the culture, routines, rules and general habits of the nursery school (one week – using field notes and personal diary). It is what Goldman-Segall (1998) noted that the researcher is using her eyes and ears as the first lens and receiver of the culture. Field notes were taken during the whole day but no video was used. In the reflective diary the feelings in both cases were diverse. The first impression of the English case was ‘What chaos!’ However, after having experienced the case of England and returning to the Greek Early years setting the sentence that I wrote in my diary was ‘What a military service!’

***Preparatory step***: to define and categorise exactly the activities from the researcher’s point of view and triangulate them with those of the children and the practitioner. During that stage the activities were divided into categories and discussed with pedagogues.

***Systematic observation***: Video recording for at least half an hour per day (3 days per week) of the adult structured activities and those that the researcher was invited to by the children. In many cases the video recording could be one hour per day or 45 minutes depending on whether or not the researcher has been invited to video film, or play with the children. The systematic observation was also based on keeping field notes of the whole day (from 9 -12 am, three days per week from February to July and November to April respectively). The observation based on the video is chosen as the most appropriate technique to gain a ‘thick description inside’ children’s lives (Flewitt, 2006; Silverman, 2005). The bodily and facial gestures are easily depicted while the combination with different data visual or not gives what Flewitt (2006: 30) mentions as ‘multilevel analysis’. Participants were informed that they were video recorded while time was devoted to them to see and get the use of the tool. Initially it was planned at the end of the day the films to be shown to them for feedback. However, children challenged this process a lot and the research design had been changed.

A small camera had been used with a possibility of taking pictures and video. Initially the idea was to use both a video camera and digital camera but during the pilot study children in England showed preferences for the small digital camera where they could easily touch it, asking for pictures, using it for taking pictures. While for the researcher it was more

convenient to use one digital multipurpose device rather than two different ones. Additionally it was less intrusive during the time children were playing. Furthermore, the researcher's eye was not behind the camera remaining blind in the narrow lens of the camera but I could see all the peripheral events that were taking place at the same time, capturing the background of the event and reporting them in the note book and reflective diary. The use of a small camera has got also the potentiality to move from one place to another easily capturing activities in relation to time and space (Murray, 2009) while giving the chance to go back on the event and check it again and again with or without sound with or without looking at the screen (Flewitt, 2006).

**Projective techniques:** refer to, what James et al. (1998:190) called 'task- centred activities'. The purpose of these activities is to motivate children's responses to an abstract topic without being intrusive and hopefully being given more in depth data. These techniques were either planned by the researcher or arose in the flow of the interaction with the child.

**Tours:** Two different types of tours have been used; child initiated and adult initiated. The adult initiated tours are those described by Clark (2004) as a 'walking interview' with children. The researcher asks the child alone, in pairs or in a small group of three children to walk with and to give her a full description of their daily life in the nursery school 'Would you like to show me what you like here in the centre?' It has been characterised as a 'child led' process where children talk about their place. As Clark and Moss (2001: 28) assert, 'the physicality and the mobility of this technique can demonstrate children's priorities which might otherwise become lost'. They have been theorised as an eloquent tool for children to speak about their indoor and outdoor environments while, as Clark and Moss (2005: 39) assert, 'children reveal the importance of past events and memories'.

Clearly, these kind of tours are particularly flexible, comprehending a high level of engagement, but as Ross, Renold, Holland and Hillman (2009) argue, such tours should be called 'guided' walks keeping the inverted commas to show that in this situation there is always a walker and a guider who interact with each other. As Pink (2007) demonstrates such tours based on visual data give a better understanding of the shared experience. Pink (2007) has proposed the term 'walking with video' but she recommends that both walking with, or without, video should not be seen as distinctive methods but as being important in understanding the participants' experience. Additionally it should be mentioned here that cases such as children's invitations to the researcher to share the same experience for

instance by sitting on a mattress and joining circle time. As with Ross et al. (2009), this study found in the flow of the visits in the English centre a different kind of tour that initially was not considered as part of the research design. Ross et al. (2009) call them 'car journeys' describing the literal journeys with cars that the researchers had with teenagers in public care. In the English case these tours could be named as 'bike', 'wheelbarrow' or 'scooter' tours and took place in the garden. These journeys are different in matters of frequency and their 'guided' nature. It was always the children that invited participation and they generally took place more than once. Hence a regular routine between the child and the researcher was established, that strengthened their relationship, while the data from these trips supported, to a certain extent, children's perspectives of the organised activities.

**Treasure basket:** The treasure basket was an approach that was inspired by children in England but has been used only by children in Greece. It started with Ian and Allan who, during their trips with the wheelbarrow, used to put items that impressed them in the basket. Initially Allan, from the start of the study walked around the room keeping his hands on a big green dragon, scaring the other children, the researcher or playing chasing games. The dragon was moved to the wheelbarrow to join him during the tour. Allan was also observed to occasionally place other favourite objects, such as pebbles and bags of toys that he used to bring from home, and soil in the basket. In fact it was interrelated with the peripheral participation (Lave and Wenger, 1991). As Allan was pushing the wheelbarrow, he would have a look at the activities that were arranged and if he liked them he picked up an object and placed it into the basket of the wheelbarrow. After completing a tour he would then stop to engage in an activity, for example, playing in the water tray. Similarly, other children, such as Ian, used to carry in toys from the infant room or my notebook when he wanted me to follow him. However, when I used a box asking from the same children to place into the picture (taken by me) of the planned activities children declined to participate in my own way. In Greece the technique is the adult's initiative. Children had been asked to place favourite items into the basket. Some of them declined while some others were coming and reported to me what they had placed into the basket.

**Routine cards:** This activity applies only to the English case. It was an activity based on the cards that practitioners showed to the children every day to announce the next routine. Hence 'the activity is sited and embedded in the local cultural context' (Burke, 2008: 33). I asked the children to indicate which activity they preferred the most. None of the children chose circle time or singing time respectively, while the majority of children indicated the outside area and Jennifer preferred 'free play'. However, the meaning of 'free play' is

related with the actual time the programme was organised creating many concerns about whether it is really 'free' or not and for this reason through the whole thesis it is placed in vertical commas (Rutannen, 2007) . The cards have been discussed with practitioners and parents during the interviews and their answers triangulated with the children's comments show that they are identical and without discrepancy. For instance, Jennifer's mother, as with a practitioner and Jennifer herself, argued that Jennifer is not keen on circle time. However Jennifer showed 'free play' and 'outdoor play' activities as a second choice respectively.

**Interviews with parents and practitioners:** The interviews were focused on adult's perceptions about the children's experience in the day care centre and also on the experiences the child transferred from the centre to home or from home to the day care centre (see Appendix B for a sample transcript). Clark (2004) declares that practitioners' and parents' experience of their child is vital in the filling of the final piece in the mosaic, as they know the child's character and identity as well as her daily routines at home and in the setting. The interviews were both formal and informal. Initially the structured questions during the parent interviews (for instance 'Do you think that your child is happy with the programme' or 'Are you happy with the planning activities that teachers are doing in the centre?') required more detailed answers than 'Yes I am' or 'Yes my child is happy'. However, showing them pictures from the planned activities or pictures that their children took, focussed their comments in other directions. For instance, in the Greek case, parents were discussing the stories that the pictures were based on and became more talkative and in some cases they admitted 'You know I told you a lie in the beginning...I am not happy with the programme but I was not sure if I could tell you how I feel' (Greek parent's comments). In the English case, on the other hand, because parents had experienced the interview process as part of the programme it was a routine and as such their comments about the pictures were either like 'I think in this activity my child will be involved' or 'what are those pictures? I never knew that the programme was organised like that' before. They approached the interview more like a questionnaire (see further the section on ethics). The difference with the Greek case was that here I could speak with parents on an informal and daily basis as the parents themselves came and shared with me experiences that the children were transferring from the setting to the home. Practitioner interviews were either formal (based on specific questions) or informal discussing the programme with them on a daily basis. However, practitioner interviews also took place through the video discussion. The video and visual data for each child was discussed and analysed with practitioners – two hours for each child.



**Digital blue camera/Digital camera:** As Hill (2006: 76) states, children are able to see advantages and disadvantages in each method that is provided by adults, young people show preferences towards some methods and not to some others. The digital blue camera is one of those. During the pilot study the camera was seen as a very attractive tool while there were many fights between the children of who is going to take it first. On the other side there were children such as Stefanie, Arthur, Eleni, Cindy and Anastasios that refused to use it. The first reaction of Jennifer for instance was to say ‘wow!!!’ and grasping the camera ran away from me refusing to listening to more instructions. The camera was found to be either problematic as a participatory tool or very powerful. There were cases that children were taking pictures just to experiment or by coincidence (Einarsdóttir, 2005), while there were other cases when children were using the camera as means to avoid an organised activity or there were cases when children squabbled over who would take the pictures, not because they wanted to photograph something but because they were attracted by the tool (Stephenson, 2009; Gallacher and Gallacher, 2008).

Reflecting on the way that children were using the camera, firstly there was a need to become familiar with it at such a level that they could take it only when they needed to use it. Data that was depicted during the period when children were getting used to the camera has not been used, while slowly-slowly the camera in the English case was hanging from my hand and children were coming and asking for it any time they wanted. In the Greek case it was on a shelf in the room and the children could take it anytime without asking me. I found myself feeling guilty, thinking that such a tool had created some difficulty in children’s lives in the setting. In the Greek case, as long as we were in the classroom the camera was placed in a particular area accessible to the children. The room was small and as such I had an overview of the room. When we were leaving the room, for instance going to the foyer the camera was kept by me and the children were able to ask to use it. However, it was just a matter of time for children to get the use of the tool and for the adults to understand that children were able to handle a real camera. Also, in the Greek case the children asked me to replace the digital blue camera with an ordinary digital camera. Hence, the digital blue camera was found to have the following drawbacks:

- The memory stick easily became full and the children in England became frustrated. After that it has was replaced with 2 GB memory stick.

- The quality of the screen was not so clear as the digital one and children challenged it (in Greece).
- Problems of getting used to it. They viewed it initially as a toy and not as a tool.
- They were putting their finger on the lens.
- They pressed the button and sometimes they inadvertently deleted their pictures.
- They took video pictures of the floor.
- They wanted to take pictures while accidentally the video was activated and they were getting upset.

In England the digital camera had been tried as well but the children were less able to handle it. It was heavier than the digital blue camera. However, in the Greek case the children did not appear to face any problems using a digital camera. Cook and Hess (2007) claim that despite the fact that the camera motivates children to express themselves, giving adults an aspect of children's perspectives and their world, in fact the construction of the camera is a limited tool well embedded into adult's research intentions and leaving out a wide selection of children's narratives. Despite this, Einarsdóttir (2005) states that children's photographs in combination with other methodological tools is an effective tool in investigating children's perspectives even if in a different context they might have different beliefs. However, the strength of this tool is based on the level of freedom that it offers to children, thus children feel more power even without an adult's surveillance. It is also a different way of communication than the verbal one, while it does not take that much time and goes further than traditional methods, such as an interview as children know better than adults what has happened behind the pictures. Hence, it could be argued that children directed the whole process according to their own rules.

**Building blocks:** The building blocks were exclusively a technique introduced by the children. Building blocks are resources that can usually be found in early years' settings. The difference was that the Greek children could only access them during the 'free play', while the English children could access them at any time. In the flow of the moment children invited researcher to see the construction of their favourite activity such as playing with the bike or train (case of Ian) or speak about an activity that they would like to avoid transferred their thought on the material-object.

The building block technique was both a visual and verbal way for the children to show their perceptions, as through out the time of the construction they used verbal and body movements to explain what was happening and for these reasons were able to interact with

the researcher. This technique has been used by Gallacher (2008) as a participatory tool. However, in his case it had been challenged as a technique because it was adult directed. For this reason in my initial design it was not featured at all. It seems that when the children take initiative it can be an effective tool for expressing perceptions. What was however unfortunate in the Greek case was that after Christmas the building blocks were removed from the room. A practitioner had punished the children for not tidying up by removing the basket with the building blocks outside the room. This event happened when I was not in the centre. The children challenged the practitioner's action in their tour by inviting me to see where the basket with the building blocks was hidden, mentioning to me that they would like the building blocks back in their classroom.

**Telephone Discussion:** The telephone discussion was again a technique introduced by the children themselves. Evans and Fuller (1996) used telephones as a medium for interview. In their case two unconnected telephones had been placed on a table in the classroom. Any child who wished to participate sat at the table and was able to speak through a telephone. The telephone machine was connected with a tie microphone and a tape recorder for a good quality of sound. The children were aware of the tape recorder and they were able to listen to the discussion after the recording. However in my study the telephone discussion is completely under different context. In England it was only Ian while in Greece it was Maria and Dafni, while there were also two cases one with Christos and one with Panayiotis that there was real telephone discussion. For instance in Panayiotis' case I was doing the interview with his mother in her office and at that very moment the child is calling her. His mother had previously mentioned that the child insists on not going in the day care centre any more without specifying the reasons why. She is asking him whether or not he would like to talk with me on the phone. A discussion with the child took place where he specified that 'I am not sick' but 'I don't want to go there again', 'I am not upset with my friends there, I love them !' , the researcher asked him if he was upset with someone in the day care centre and the child said 'yes' then I asked him if he was upset with me and he said 'no' but then he changes the topic saying to the researcher that he enjoys the CD with the song that I gave to him.

Telephone discussion is also part of the play of the children the time that were playing with the machine toy. Ian for instance invited me twice to talk with someone on the telephone as the telephone was ringing: 'Ring, ring, ring, ring! It is for you'. The researcher is grasping the chance and tells the child that it was her supervisor from the university asking how his day was and what he enjoys the most in the day care centre. A similar event occurred twice

in different days and the discussion shows Ian's interest for the boat that was constructed on the other side of the garden and his desire to go and visit it. In a similar way, Maria in Greece through telephone discussion asks for her mother to come and pick her up as soon as possible from the centre asking for the researcher to talk on the phone making the same request. The telephone discussion within the day care centre shows the child's persistence in the same topic, the boat for Ian, the mother's arrival for Maria.

**Guess what I like game:** This was a game designed together with the children where I tried to guess what the child likes the most. I pretended that I was sure a child is keen on an activity or an event and the child answers spontaneously 'Yes!' or 'No!'. When the answer is 'no' I pretended to be frustrated and I made another effort to find the activity that the child really likes, the child then spontaneously explains his answer further to me. This game gives the children the opportunity to feel more an expert than a researcher (adult) and when the researcher guesses correctly, they celebrate together. The guess what I like game has been tried with every child on an every day basis. The function of the game took on different structures within the time, it could be played everywhere and at anytime with many children. It was played at the table during the time children were playing with plasticine. It was played in the foyer or in the mattress; it was played in the corridor or in the lift. It was well embedded in children's culture, as many times they discussed whether or not they liked each other's clothes, shoes, and food. The fact that I could not guess a child's answer helped to make the child feel stronger than the adult and activated their spontaneous answer. There was also consistency in their answers from different days. However, it should be mentioned here that if the researcher is interested in playing this game, they should not suggest it but on the flow of the game balance the positive with negative answers. If many negative answers follow one after the other the child will lose interest in continuing further.

Based on the idea of 'flexible techniques' Table 3.2 (over) shows how children challenged my research agenda and demonstrated to me their own way of participating. The initial design was completely different following the Mosaic approach techniques such as 'daily diary', 'map making', 'book making' (see further section 3.6). From the initial design only the video filming and digital camera, in connection with the interviews with practitioners and parents, and 'the document for the Child's best interest' that was kept every day by the English practitioners describing the organised activities, their reflection in connection with the daily observation has been kept. A similar document was not used in the Greek case as the practitioners were not used to working in this way. I had designed a similar document

for them, but it was not part of their usual way of working and therefore an informal interview on daily basis during or after the end of each session, occurred. Docket and Perry (2005: 517) state that ‘there will be no ‘best’ approach that suits all children or all contexts’, rather researchers are encouraged to adopt approaches that are contextually relevant and that make sense to the children involved (Hill, 2006).

### **3.4 Data Analysis**

According to Rogoff (2003), people’s development must be understood within the cultural surroundings. Following her claim that for the deeper and further understanding of how the culture interrelates with the child’s development, five other parameters need to be considered:

- the person who is working with the child;
- the motivation of the involvement;
- the cultural norms that direct peoples’ way of doing things;
- the kind and the regularity of the activity in the daily routines;
- and finally the goals and the beliefs of people.

Rogoff’s (2003: 49) argument with the previous linear diagrammatic representations of how the individuals are interrelated with the culture is that there is a deception of individuals and cultures as ‘stand-alone entities’. Rogoff discusses mutuality between the person and the culture where ‘cultural and personal processes create each other’ (2003: 49). The emphasis is on the activity, the process and individual’s contribution. It is what Rogoff (2003: 56) entitles the ‘transformation-of participation perspective’. The individual and the other members of the society participate in practices causing change (Personal and Interpersonal) while they construct together what they have inherited from their ancestors at that historical moment (Cultural-Institutional).

The three planes of analysis that have been proposed by Rogoff (1998; 2003); Personal, Interpersonal and Cultural-Institutional, should be considered wherever the focus of the analysis is. The three factors are embraced in the activity. The isolation of one of the aspects will bring the analysis into the concept of the linear theories of human development. Additionally, the overestimation of the third aspect (cultural-institutional) can inevitably be problematic in understanding how the culture is constructed through the contribution of the person and the generations and biological factors. Matusov (2007)

states that Rogoff's 'plane of analysis' constitutes an alternative solution between the problem of reductionism and holism in sociocultural theory. It does not isolate the individual but maintains it as a whole while it is manageable and complete without being messy and much extended causing confusion.

Goldman (2007) argues that visual data must capture diverse comments and the role of the researcher should move beyond the notion of just collecting and constructing a hierarchical relationship with the data. It is the other notion of ethics that goes beyond the anonymity and privacy related with how the researcher is dealing with the data collected. All the data visual, or not, has been perceived as important elements in the construction of children's points of view. Hence, the video has been viewed more as 'sources for data than data in themselves' (Erickson, 2007: 153), while the field notes, interviews, comments and other visual data such as children's pictures, and games are all together informative sources out of which the data are constructed and 'seeing' as a whole. Erickson has highlighted the pitfalls in viewing the video separately from other sources and mentions that what the person 'sees' and is viewing in a video is not simply what is enclosed in the film itself but what he terms as 'pedagogical commitment' (Erickson, 2007: 153) that reveals the thickness of the cultural discourses about the child, learning and teaching. Additionally, Rose (2007: 35) recommends that 'the good eye' in viewing and interpreting visual data needs a 'compositional interpretation' examining atmosphere, sounds, angles, focus and so on. However, she states that visual data cannot stand alone whilst being reflective demands moving beyond just seeing the data but also sharing and reflecting and seeking the cultural connection.

During the transcription and analysis of the video, still shots have been taken and integrated within the text. These shots are keeping within the text to support the description of the event and the facial and bodily expressions that may give the non verbal stories (Stern, 2003) especially when child's perception is not clear (see further next chapter English case). Plowman and Stephen (2008: 549) argue that the 'visual nature' of the video is missing when the transcription is only written and they recommend pictorial representation by using a comic book format. Flewitt (2006) argues that despite the ethical issues the images are an integral part of the analysis and representation. She argues that transcription is always transformation and reduction of the event following the aims of the study. Flewitt (2006) recommends that 'representation' instead of the term 'transcription' shows the process of the interpretation of that data analysis especially when it is based on different data resources.

Hence, she uses the term ‘dynamic text’ meaning ‘not only to reflect the temporal, spatial, and kinaesthetic nature of visually recorded interaction but also the multileveled interpretative process of the researcher, participants and readers’ (Flewitt, 2006:35). However, for ethical reasons pictorial representation cannot be used as the only way for representation of data while the combination of the transcribed text together with the video stills are giving a better description of the event. The use only of pictorial representation can make the researcher become subjective in the choice of the pictures while the images cannot capture the peripheral events that may influence participants’ actions.

The video stills have been used in the analysis of the video for capturing facial expression or to describe child’s actions. However, what has been used in representation of an event in this thesis is a simple version of video still ‘fuzzing’ or reduction of the pixel count as has been described by Flewitt (2006). Hence, the video is played in Media Player, then a video still is taken and transferred into the ‘Nero Photo shop viewer’ then the picture is edited and inserted in the text. For the representation, the same picture is ‘inverted’ or ‘posterized’ (an option in the *Nero* programme) respectively depending on how recognisable the child is. The video shots show the pause and the emphasis, while in the next chapter (see case of England) it will be shown in the ‘present moment’ (Stern, 2003), where the researcher can see what the child is thinking but it is not clear their perception showing complexity in the interpretation of the data from adults point of view (see further Chapter 4). However, video stills are not used extensively for the representation for ethical reasons (see section 3.5, ‘ethics’).

Before starting the analysis, cataloguing and transcribing the visual data is demanded as a first step in the analysis of the visual data where links between background information, participants take place (Corsaro, 1982). The video has been integrated since the beginning of the study into the field notes with a cyber link as the researcher’s diary in the following example shows:

*Sindy is on the climbing apparatus. She grasped my hand and she said “come”. We go to the babies’ room; she goes straight away to the new sensory corner. Stefanie follows us as well. I record a video of the event [MOV04754.MPG](#) and [MOV04755.MPG](#). Sindy is exploring the area. She looks fascinated by the new sensory corner, touching, feeling, hearing, and looking through the see-through material. It is a nice feeling seeing her exploring. This is the first day this corner has been organised for the babies’ room and I*

*can see that many children from the toddlers' room are here playing rather than the babies... Sindy leaves and she goes to the tray with the flour [MOV04757.MPG](#). Jennifer, Stefanie and Ian are playing there.....*

(Field notes, 30<sup>th</sup> June - English case).

Clicking on the link, the researcher can go straight to viewing or listening to the video or visual image. However, the diary file and the visual data folder should be kept in a stable position otherwise the link will not lead to searching the folder. In this way, following Corsaro's (1982) attempt to include all the information not only during the analysis but also through the whole method, the organisation of the data has been kept. Running narratives and information that the audio visual itself cannot capture are held in reserve. The same process has been followed with the rest of the visual data, such as audio recordings and children's photos, placing them together with the prior events and comments. Then the data are catalogued into flow charts (see Table 3.4, Appendix A), as Ash (2007) recommends. Flow charts consist of an overview of the most significant event of a day. Corsaro (1982) states that cataloguing the data assures validity in that the researcher's interpretation is recorded at the time the data has been stored and is not based on her memory. In addition to this the cataloguing process makes the data easily accessible to the researcher by checking the summaries of the flow chart.

From the flow chart the most significant events for further analysis are chosen (Ash, 2007). For instance from the flow chart in Table 3.4 (Appendix A) three events have been chosen, Santa Claus, the event in the field note and the video during craft time. Engle, Conant and Greeno (2007) wonder how the researcher knows what to analyse when choosing the video data. The first two events have been chosen as there is information from the three Planes of Analysis (Rogoff, 1998, 2003) helping to achieve more in depth analysis. The last event has been chosen due to complexity that appears in the researcher's questions (Corsaro, 1982). Maria's point is missing but the practitioner's and mother's point is helpful for the triangulation (Corsaro, 1982; Rogoff, 2003). However, another criterion to choose an event from the flow chart was the frequency of a topic that is discussed the most by the children (Engle et al., 2007) no matter if the topic appears under a different context.

For instance the Santa Claus event goes to material culture and to a child's well being while the crafting activity goes to the handicrafts code. The videos chosen have been transcribed by the researcher herself without the use of any software due to the noise background (Corsaro, 1982). Hence choosing from each day what has been observed as the



most important by the child themselves, the significant event is chosen for further analysis and transferred to the Table 3.6 (see Appendix A) keeping at the same time the focus on other elements such as prior events, whether or not it is the child's initiative, coding and associated with the information coming from the child, the parent and practitioner.

Thus, based on the sociocultural model for the analysis of data, a table (see Table 3.7 Appendix A) has been created where all the parameters are considered in building the child's perspective together with the research questions. It should be noted that in the first row of the table after the child's name there is a title named 'theme'. This theme is different from the code. The code and the theme sometimes are the same while some times they are different. The correlation between the theme and the code is related to the child's comments. The theme is related to the child themselves who has pointed out the issue to the researcher. For instance, in the first session of the analysis chapter the theme is the wolf, this is what the child said to the researcher the first time he met her asking 'are you scared of the wolf?' Then in the description of the event the theme appears again in the code but this time having some subdivided codes related to the research questions. For instance, in the above wolf theme, the correlated question is how the child expresses his feelings and whether or not he participates in the activity - talking about the wolf, showing the book and playing the game, taking pictures. All the components are interrelated with the research questions, for instance, how the child expresses himself is related with the second research question together with child's comments. If the adult is not involved the last questions is omitted. While for the validity of the data what the researcher has found through the observation is correlated with parents, practitioners and child's comments. It should be mentioned here that is not possible to capture at all times parents or practitioners or child comments. However, in that case the priming or the events of the next day are interconnected.

In the second level of analysis of the events video is combined with the research questions together with the theme as has been defined by the child in a table with the most important aspects of each event. For example Table 3.5 (Appendix A) shows how the event with the children playing the wolf with a practitioner is codified. The main element of 'what the child is thinking and believes' is destroyed if you see the event only from the part of the coding. Barron (2007: 175) states that in the coding phase there is always a possibility in the re-presentation of the data to lose 'the whole feeling of the interaction'. For instance, in the above example the child seems to participate in the activity. However data analysis

in this way reveals that there is a complexity (Ash, 2007) in the shared meaning as the researcher's comments show. What the video and practitioner comments reveal do not agree with the child's and the parent's comments. Barron (2007: 175) therefore recommends a system of 'multiple methods of representation', such as transcribing the video underlining the key topics, description of the behaviour (facial expressions, tone, gestures) and still frames for further illustration of the bodily expressions .

To keep connected with all the units of analysis and the different methods a next level of analysis has been created based on the Mosaic approach, as has been proposed by Moss and Clark (2001, 2005) but named a 'table of mosaic of the events' (see Table 3,8 Appendix A). The events are correlated with the theme and it has been created showing not only the different methods that are used to capture a child's perspectives but also the frequency of the events and the more in depth meaning that the continuity between the methods and the phenomenon can give to understand and capture a child's points of view. To indentify segments of analysis the events of each mosaic table have been placed in content logs creating a corpus of data giving at the same time a short overview of the analysis (Barron, 2007). The parts of Table 3.11 and Table 3.10 called 'function in context', relate to a term used by Ash (2007: 218), where the utterance of an event is transcribed and then a significant aspect is selected and is correlated with the actual function within the event. This part of the table is transferred to the content logs giving an overview of the activity as a whole, correlated with events sharing the same theme, questions and details. Hence all the units of the analysis are strongly connected. For instance the Mosaic of the events in the theme wolf or Material culture as a code is interrelated with the three planes of analysis, with the methods and the researcher that influences with her appearance the three planes of analysis as she becomes part of the planes. The subdivided codes which are interrelated with the research questions and the review of literature, for instance, how the child participates by indenting or refusing, using secondary adjustment or obeying the rule is captured in the 'function in context' cell in what Ash (2007: 218) describes as 'follow-up functional analysis'. This kind of dialogic analysis (making a more in- depth analysis within the dialogue examining the utterance within the significant event) uses a discourse frame as follow-up moving across the dialogue. For instance in Panayiotis' question 'are you scared of the wolf?' the follow-up function analysis is as follows:

**Table 3.11 ‘Follow-up functional analysis’**

2 <sup>nd</sup> Event: ‘are you scared of the wolf?’ (Panayiotis)	26 November, field notes
‘Are you scared of the wolf?’ Panayiotis <b>(asking about the fear)</b> ‘No I am not scared’ <b>(answering there is no fear )</b> ‘Then take this book it is yours’ <b>(offering the book)</b> ‘ohh thank you ...but what about you? Are you scared of the wolf?’ <b>(researcher asking about fear)</b> No answer <b>(avoid to give an answer)</b>	<b>Function in Context:</b> Panayiotis is coming and asking the researcher again if she is scared of the wolf. Learning that she is not scared he is offering to her the book as a gift. However when the researcher is asking him if he is scared of the wolf he avoids to answer.

The above analysis is similar to Table 3.4 - the wolf video, showing how complexities are interwoven. Once again keeping a strong connection within the events across time is crucial. Thus using the theme as a main code in the analysis the activity is connected with the context and the meaning making. The mosaic of the events capturing the theme, characteristics such as the chronological sequence, the frequency, the different methods such as video, field note, games, interviews, building blocks etc. (see Table 3.8 Appendix A) identified the meaning making. In this way what Corsaro et al. (2002: 325) describe as ‘priming events’ are placed as first in the row, showing the chronological order of the events and how the child reproduces prior events into the whole data collection.

Hence it becomes clearer how the video data implants more information when they are connected with the priming or the next event, while at the same time they keep the event closer to the context-theme. The arrow on the Table 3.8 indicates this chronological order. In this part of the analysis the title of the event takes the name of the theme as has been defined by the children, for instance the wolf, the bike, the fence, the ownership. However the idea of children’s themes is kept in the naming of the videos. Through all these themes the researcher clarified which parts of the research question are interrelated with the child’s comments emphasising the child’s role in the coding process and placing the purpose of the study and the research questions at a secondary level.

Derry et al. (2010: 22) define the above analysis as a ‘play-by-play’ description where the main focus is not on counting the kind of events across a case but the ‘interpretation of episodes that follow one another in time are presented sequentially’. Wortham (2004) and Glenn et al. (1999) have also used this kind of analysis in their research. It is based on the idea of the conversation analysis (Glenn et al., 1999) offering a microanalytic description (Koschmann, 1999) and pays particular attention to the naturally occurring events, demanding detailed transcription. It is more an open-ended description without any hypotheses (Glenn et al., 1999). Hence the researcher focuses on episodes that have a common topic and scrutinises how these events are progressing or changing across the day or days, while at the same time it shows how the individual and the group, through manifold actions, collectively produce phenomena (Derry et al., 2010).

Thus the first section of the next chapter about wolf is interrelated with the Q1 and Q2 showing the complexity of capturing child’s perspectives. The second section refers to ownership and the questions Q3, Q4 and Q5. The third section discusses the English case and explores how the meaning of participation is perceived in the English day care centre and to what extent the child is encouraged or discouraged by an adult (Q3 and Q5). The fourth section of the English case discusses ‘the bike’ episode and is correlated with Q2, Q5 and Q6 while the last section about ‘the fence and the outside area’ is correlated with the Q5 and Q6.

Following the children’s main themes eight categories were identified:

- The wolf, Santa Claus, Religious, Christmas party → cultural material
- Use of real or plastic material → mature activities
- Being with or without other age group children → Age segregation
- Height and Handicrafts → Ownership, spatial restrictions, duration
- Circle time
- Wooden house, the window, the snow, Boat, fence, bee, bike, aeroplane → curriculum and outside area
- Transformation → Agency, child contribution on the planning,
- Well being

This kind of categorization protects the researcher from bias as the issues identified by children are the important focus and not the researcher’s aims and research questions,

while at the same time the event and the methods are keeping a connection with the shared meaning. For example, the video analysis in Table 3.6 clarifies the above. The theme based on the child's comments is the 'broken car'. Looking into the coding on the right part of the description the code 'throwing', 'exploring' and 'reported' that are correlated with the purpose, the research questions and the review of literature miss the main point without the theme that has been indentified by Christos as the 'the broken car'. Connecting the event with similar episodes such as the 'trolley video 1, and 2' and field notes and comments the categorisation moves to the mature activities as the shared meaning involves whether or not the child has access to real materials and how the child handles the situation 'throwing and breaking' or trying to fix it. Otherwise the code 'throwing' is misunderstood as the child can throw because he wants, for instance, to 'destroy the school' but the meaning of throwing in that case is correlated with well being and not with the exploring. Hence, the words 'throwing, exploring, reporting, interrogated and preventing' are the elements that 'formulate the structure of events that comprise specific instances of the routine' (Corsaro and Heise, 1990: 2) or what Ash (2007) described as 'follow-up functional analysis'. Further, at the same time the practitioner's actions are added to the event and 'preventing' shows that the activity has not been completed due to adult's intervention. Adult's involvement is not perceived as an extraneous event (Corsaro and Heise, 1990) but as a factor that terminates or encourages the routine. This difference to Corsaro's work is related to the different purposes and focus of this study while here at this exact point is the sociocultural contribution of Rogoff's theory. The sequences of the above formulated structures are very important, while the significance of the event to the acquisition of the social knowledge is kept in mind (Corsaro and Heise, 1990). However, this study in contrast with the case of Corsaro and Heise (1990) and Angelillo et al. (2007), avoided abstracting the structure to generate it in cultural routines due to the small sample. This study has therefore viewed the events on a case by case basis (Lehn and Heath, 2007).

Angellilo et al. (2007), Rogoff et al. (1993) along with Corsaro and Heise (1990) recommend an abstracting code schema that enables the researcher to apply it in different cases offering comparisons into different cultures and activities sustaining fidelity with the shared meaning. Hence the code schema is not derived from the transcription but from the descriptive account of the ethnographic analysis (function in context).

In addition to this, the present study was intending to search for the mutual shared meaning across the all elements of analysis and not the structure of the routine itself. However, what has been found really useful in Corsaro and Heise's (1990) 'production-system' model is the strong logical sequence across the events and the fact that all the events are so unique that generalisation initially seems to be impossible. For instance, Corsaro and Heise (1990) discuss that the participants themselves are unique, while the analysis is so detailed that it could happen only in that specific moment and place. There is evidence of similar findings in this study in relation to the first section in chapter 4 relating to the 'wolf story'. Many of the described events are part of the specific circumstances in the particular setting, however, the lack of generalisation does not mean that the events lose their value. The purpose of this study was to find children's perspectives of the setting in the present time. All the events, despite their uniqueness, show that children are capable of revealing their perspectives in a more complex manner than the researcher had initially expected. In addition, when considering to what extent the events could be compared, Corsaro and Heise (1990) state that abstracting the essential features of each event gives an ability for comparison. For example, this study has identified common routines in both countries such as the 'not stepping' rule and the 'circle time'.

Corsaro and Heise (1990) state that in focusing on the purpose of the activity and on general elements of the activity, as in the case of the 'circle time', through the abstraction and modelling of one case the researcher examines to what extent similar events can be compared to each other. For instance the 'broken down car' that is presented in the Table 3.6 has a completely different structure from the 'Trolley 1' event that has been counted as relevant. Corsaro and Heise (1990) explain these differences in relation to the difference in the logic across different episodes as result of individual's knowledge.

Summarising, keeping the video analysis tracked with the rest of the events, methods and data (Table of Analysis and Mosaic of the events), summarizing the 'function in context' into the content logs (see for instance Table 3.10 (Appendix A, the wolf-material culture) the complexity of the events is captured. This complexity should not be seen as a 'limitation' but as 'strength' (Ash, 2007; Flewitt, 2006; Plowman and Stephen, 2008) of the analysis and for further interpretation. As Ash (2007) argues, in the sociocultural analysis to manage the problem of discontinuity of the meaning making across time and events a general overview of the events is kept while more

emphasis is given to some videos where the details need further analysis when the researcher has found some complexity. Collier (2001) states that the researcher has to always turn, checking the visual ‘whole’ of the events. Hence, for instance in the example of the ‘circle time’ routine the general overview in both countries was that children are not keen on that activity, however some videos were analysed further and in more detail for a better understanding, while some others show an opposite perspective from the general overview such as the ‘Clap your little hands event’ in the English case where children repeatedly asked for the activity to be continued. In that case the researcher looked more in detail at the structure of the event highlighting the element that made children change their perception of an activity.

### **3.5 Ethical Issues**

This section highlights ethical issues that arose out of the research conducted with young children. Ethical considerations from the beginning until the end of the research are discussed and matters such as informed consent, anonymity, gifts and visual data critically considered. Particular emphasis will be given to the parent’s and child’s informed consent to examine how parent’s informed consent can influence the research with young children. The meaning of ‘on going’ informed consent will also be examined.

In the initial design of the project careful reference was made to ethical guidelines (BERA, 2004) to consider the balance of harm and effect on the children, confidentiality and issues of informed consent (Alderson, 1995). Reference was also made to the principles and ethical guidance developed by the National Children’s Bureau (2002; 2003) applying particularly to research with children. Approval was also sought from the University of Wolverhampton School of Education Ethics committee. In the case of visual methods, gaining informed consent is much more sensitive and problematic. Informed consent had been asked on three levels, the day care centre, the parents and the child. Firstly the researcher contacted the day care centre gaining written permission from the manager and the practitioners for the research, then conducted interviews with parents. In the following section the parent’s and child’s agreements will be discussed followed by more general ethical concerns.

#### **Parents’ informed consent**

Parents were initially informed about the research by the manager of the day care centre and following this, a meeting was arranged with the researcher to sign the informed

consent letters and give further details about the research where it was needed. There are two significant differences between the two settings. The manager and the staff of the English day care centre being gatekeepers (Flewitt, 2005a; Bone, 2005) of the whole approach initially informed parents through a leaflet about the aims, the purpose and the techniques of the research. The aim was for the research design to be adopted into the culture and regulation of the day care centre (Bone, 2005), as a detailed research design had been given to the manager. However, during the meeting parents just wanted to sign the informed consent without asking for more details about the research. Although I tried to start a discussion with them on a regular basis, the parents always appeared in a hurry or answered ‘we know, it is not a problem for us’. Hence, I did not feel that the process of informed consent really helped me to build up a stronger relationship with parents.

Additionally, the manager advised me to be particularly careful in approaching parents, mentioning a series of rules that should be followed according to the regulation of the centre (Alderson, 1995). Conroy and Harcourt (2009: 162) discuss the need for a ‘familiar language’ between researchers and parents. The parents in this day care centre were used to working with the staff in the same symmetry as the researcher and they were particularly familiar with the whole process of taking pictures and videos without identifying any ethical issues, as they had previously signed informed consent forms for the setting. Flewitt (2005) notes that when practitioners are the gatekeepers of the negotiation with parents, parents may permit their child to participate for fear that they are going to receive a different kind of service if they decide to opt out of the research process. Here Flewitt (2005) recommends both a formal and an informal meeting with the parents so as to confirm to them that their decision is not going to be influenced the services provided. This issue was clarified by the leaflet and the adult’s informed consent. However, Flewitt’s research demanded visits at home which originally helped her build an atmosphere of reciprocity. In contrast, my study from the outset was defined by the manager’s insistence that meetings should only take place in the setting and after permission and arrangement with the staff, due to the sensitivity of the families’ background. Another limitation could be seen in relation to my ethnicity. Being bilingual and having an easily recognisable and strong Mediterranean accent possibly led to some parents feeling less confident with me for further negotiations.

Avis, Bulman and Leighton, (2007) conducted research in a Sure Start centre and investigated parents’ perceptions in relation to the attendance of these settings. They found two opposite tendencies: those who see the centres as a good opportunity for social contact



and social mobility by gaining new skills and to find a job and those who are particularly suspicious, and 'keep to themselves' (Avis et al., 2007). The users of centres may express concern about whether or not they should expose themselves to these kind of integrated programmes revealing a general insecurity towards any kind of interference. Here Aries' (1978) argument that modernisation demands that families handle, protect and secure each other from the 'decay of the city' and that outside control seems to create a strong classification between the private and public seems to apply. However, as Avis et al. (2007) state, parents who attend these centres are concerned about issues of stigmatization. The strong orientation of the idea of the 'child and family at risk' can be particularly problematic for those families and children. As Avis et al. (2007) found, these parents feel particularly insecure in relation to their children's attitude and the meaning of being a 'good parent' (Vandenbroeck, 2006a, 2006b).

Referring to the Greek case, the parent's attitude was completely opposite. Initially, I gave parents a leaflet informing them about the research through the practitioner. As the practitioner and the manager mentioned, the first reaction of the parents was against the research and they were asking about approval from an ethics committee not from England but from the Greek Government. The manager advised me to meet firstly with parents personally to explain exactly what the research was about in case the parents had the wrong impression and secondly to apply to the ethical committee in the central administrator of the OEE in Athens.

The manager provided me with parents' telephone details and let me contact them personally. There were two main concerns here. Firstly, in the parents' mind was the idea of doing psychological research and they expressed concerns that 'we don't want our children to become experimental objects in the lab of psychology' (parent's comments) and secondly 'on the TV programme (the name was mentioned) it shows that people are using video for paedophilia...how are you going to use them?' (Parent's comments).

What the manager had reported to me has been repeated during the individual meetings. However, there was a third more crucial factor. Parents thought that the research was conducted by the day care staff themselves and they had not thought of the researcher as an independent person. This misunderstanding arose from the fact that it had been mentioned that the researcher was previously a member of staff in the day care centre. The parents being particularly disappointed about the way the day care centre was currently working

thought that there was an intention to manipulate their children in ways of doing research in the field of psychology.

I personally contacted the parents individually and met them in a place outside the day care centre where they started talking to me about problems they faced with the provision. Bone (2005) has pointed out that between the settings the pedagogical way of working is reflected in the process of gaining informed consent. On seeing details of the whole research design parents were happy to sign the informed consent letting me give them a full description of the aims, the procedure and techniques. After all this they were particularly happy to start the collaboration. An atmosphere of trust and reciprocity was built through the whole process and the intention is to reflect this throughout the entire research. Parents talked to their children about the research, they exchanged experiences of the research in the day care centre with children (something that parents reported they have never encountered before in children's experience from the centre to home), while they were more spontaneous in talking about issues related to their child.

### **Ethical issues beyond ownership**

Coad and Lewis (NECF, 2004: 16) distinguish data from information: 'information refers to what is collected (e.g. a piece of video film), while the process of conversation or extraction from information generates data - the units or material analysed. Thus, the data are a subject of the information'. Significantly, everything that is collected from the research project such as video and photographs firstly and mostly belongs to the children according to the ethical code. Initially, I was always planning to give a copy of the images to children after the discussion with them.

However, when I asked children to discuss the visual data there were many times when they did not appear to be interested in the images and there were also times when I thought that the children had kept the images but actually they had been kept by staff for record keeping and, in the case of England, had been displayed on the door of the setting and not given to the child. When I asked a practitioner why they did not give the picture to the child she answered to me that 'Nothing is going to be wasted in this setting'. I could not really understand what she meant by that but I was concerned that these images should not be used for display without asking the child and myself. The picture was from the play dough and had been given to Jennifer at the time that her mother came to pick her up. It seems that on the way to leave Jennifer lost or 'forgot' the picture. The next morning, Jennifer noticed the picture on the door and she pointed it out to me during snack time.

She said that it 'Doesn't matter. Let's leave it there to see it every day' but after a few days the picture was no longer there and a practitioner said it was destroyed and they had thrown it away. Additionally they told me that any visual data after 6 months is destroyed and is never given to parents outside of the centre.

Another issue is related with the final DVD of the result of the study, including pictures or video from the children. This data has not been reported back to participants – reflecting the need to consider a number of ethical issues. Many concerns arise related to protection and harm in both cases. As Alderson and Morrow (2004: 63) state: 'researchers protect children and themselves when they are able to discuss the problems with the colleagues, advisers and reviewers, and when they justify their decisions in their research reports'.

What has been found however as an ethical symmetry was the fact that practitioners in the English case did not want parents to view the videos, being concerned about some parents who did not want their child to be viewed by other (parents). An issue that did not come up during the time I had meetings with parents about informed consent. In addition to this, in the flow of the research a practitioner mentioned that it was not practice in the setting for videos to be given to parents due to concerns about how they might be used. Indeed, during the interview with parents in the English case it has been found that some parents wanted to use the visual data, for example, as a way to convince an ex-boyfriend to come back at home. Discussing with the manager the above concerns, and recalling issues of harm towards children (Alderson, 2004), it was therefore agreed with the staff that no visual data would be given in DVD form to parents as a result of concerns as to how they are going to be used. It is not the children themselves that are the holders of these videos, but parents. The use is not guaranteed after these images are given to the children.

Regarding the artefacts that children produce during the research process, Dockett and Perry (2007) state that children have the right to keep or give them to the researcher as long as they are willing. Alderson and Morrow (2004) refer to issues concerning how the researcher will keep in touch with the participants after the project has finished and how the participants could see changes in their lives after the project. The feedback and the outcomes of the research seem to be problematic due to the geographical changes and the possibility of loss of contact with the participants (NECF, 2004). Contact has been kept with children and their parents even after the end of the project (Flewitt, 2005) but only to the level that this is possible. Here, there were differences between the settings in Greece and England. Children England, for example, generally move to one of a number of

nursery schools in the region in September after their third birthday and unless their younger siblings attend the setting, practitioners often lose contact with parents.

Thus, reporting back to children is not always an easy process and children may give different-antithetical responses (Morrow, 2005) or may not respond at all (Clark and Moss, 2001). When I returned to the Greek setting after an absence of six months, the children generally appeared shy or busy with their own tasks, keeping a distance from me. Although I felt disappointed, as nothing was like before, in fact having the chance to meet the parents after two days confirmed a different perspective. The parents reported that at home the children said that 'The Miss from England visited us today' (Maria's mother) or 'Do you know that Miss Angeliki is back, I saw her today!' (Christos' mother). This notion of 'back' made me reflect on whether or not we have the right to appear and disappear in children's lives in the day care centre like mushrooms. However, my first thought was to check whether or not these children were also in the Greek setting which made me feel a bit more relieved in the matter of 'being back'.

Referring now to the Greek case, another ethical consideration arises. How does the researcher protect not only children but also the practitioners in the use of video data? The videos revealed some concern over the way some practitioners were treating the children. Also what if giving the 'best' videos to parents led them to getting upset about a detail that the researcher had not been aware of? The above decision is firstly due to the fact that the same children and staff are still in the day care centre while it is assumed that giving the parents an 'overview' of what is happening in the day care centre could lead to more difficulty in the collaboration between the staff and the children.

However, these children are meant to be in the day care centre for the next academic year which means that I can easily keep in touch with them, sharing the videos without adult involvement which can also give the potential for future work. Flewitt (2006) has pointed out a series of ethical issues related to visual data but the present study has found more ethics related to the information available to parents, putting at risk not only the children but also the other participants such as parents and practitioners. Abbott and Langston (2005) also discuss the issue of confidentiality when the researcher is working for a certain period of time with parents, children and staff. For instance, in the flow of the research, it was realised that my background as an experienced pre-school teacher on one hand, can lead parents to give permission but on the other hand their intention was to gain 'a third experienced eye' of how children experience their lives in the day care centre. Issues of

power are raised here. The researcher has been viewed as a medium to get access to something that they could not have under normal circumstances. The concern is how practitioners feel in this case.

How are parents attitudes about viewing something that they do not agree with guaranteed? To what extent does the manager's position to give access manipulate and patronise the practitioner's position? In all the above questions the researcher is in possible danger of creating problematic issues. The exploitation does not refer here to the child but to the practitioner, which in my case I would have exploited her position due to my position as a permanent member of staff. Hence in doing research with children it is not only the child that can be 'silent' but also all the other participants who are involved who can suddenly become 'silent'.

### **Children's informed consent**

There has recently been much debate around whether the participant's agreement to participate in the research should be defined as consent or assent (NECF, 2004). There is no guaranteed reipe concerning which age children are competent to give informed consent . Hill (2005) emphasizes that the age of the children should not be considered as an obstacle but their competence, while the researcher should be particularly alert to the given information. Participants, whether they are children or not should not be theorised as incompetent. Informed consent is taken first by that person who is in charge of speaking about the child (parents and teacher) and then to further discuss with the child (Derry et al., 2010; Alderson, 2004; Hill, 2005; Harcourt and Conroy, 2005). Alderson (2004) asserts that it depends on the topic, the researcher's skills, the child, and their own experience. In all steps of the informed consent process the researcher must be sure about how well they have informed all the participants. Alderson states that a harmful adult's attitude leads to harmful research methods and as such to false results, creating in this way a vicious cycle. Dandy and Farrell (2004) mention that as long as children are considered competent then they are able to give their own consent to participate in research or not. Despite the fact that sometimes they are happy to participate in the project, their parent's consent eliminated their decision (see also Einarisdóttir, Dockett and Perry, 2009). The last but most important part of the informed consent process was associated with the child, where a small A4 poster about the research was designed to be discussed with the child (Flewitt, 2006) and to ask for permission to participate.

The initial informed consent was not one page. Inspired by the review of literature that the participant should be aware of aims, the methods and the purpose of the research, a small booklet similar to a story book has been prepared (Hill, 2005; Alderson, 2004, 2005). On the 8<sup>th</sup> of February the research diary was titled: 'Disaster with the informed consent!!!'. Using stamps I have invited some older children –age 4 years old to sign the informed consent. Some of them were willing to listen but others just took the stamp and ran away after looking at the third page of the booklet. 'They are not interested!' was the comment. A second A4 informed consent was therefore designed and given to the same children to be signed without putting a stamp. The researcher read the page to the children and at the end of the agreement the child and the researcher put their signature. At the same time the tools such as the digital blue camera were shown to the child (Harcourt and Conroy, 2005) thus allowing the chance for the child to become familiar with the tools. The last informed consent was an ongoing verbal process allowing the child to withdraw from some or all the research stages at any time. It was more understandable by children (Ford, Sankey and Crisp, 2007). In many cases some children specifically asked for video or digital photographs not to be taken by the researcher or another child or adult and sometimes when viewing the visual data with the researcher the children declined to comment (Alderson 1995; Flewitt, 2005a, 2006).

However, when repeating with the same children the second informed consent, the children signed but just left without asking or even refusing to participate despite the initial agreement or just waiting to grasp the digital blue camera that has attracted their attention and has hid herself under the tower-the hidden space of the children in the present setting. There were also some cases when children were asking to sign again and again the informed consent in order to gain attention and not really to participate. It was not only the 'understandability' (Ford et al., 2007) but also a process not in accordance with the children's way of thinking or the power that most probably I was exercising over them as a result of being an adult (Einarsdóttir, 2007; Harcourt and Conroy, 2005).

What was decided for the actual research was that I would not obtain full written informed consent at the very beginning of the project but when the child had already experienced the process. This approach however demands that the researcher first obtains verbal permission before starting observing and filming. This approach helps the children feel that their privacy is respected (Diekema, 2003). For example, there were many cases in both Greece and England that children clearly said 'No, don't take a picture' while in another case the same child could invite me to take a video. The question I wrote in my

reflective diary was: 'How is it possible to ask a child to participate in something when he has not really experienced before?' Following Rogoff's (2003) theory of intent participation, the child should have experienced the process first and then decide whether or not to participate. The availability of the techniques is not enough for the child to understand the process.

There is a possibility that in just signing an informed consent form, no matter what the clarity of pictures and the icons on it (Alderson, 2004), the child perceives it as an abstract agreement (Ford et al., 2007) and it is therefore not really informed consent (Einarsdóttir, 2007). Additionally, Cocks (2006) suggests that in seeking informed consent in research with children, it is essential to adopt a broader meaning of competence and agency, considering the whole circumstances beyond the binary notion of maturity and immaturity.

Furthermore, the initial informed consent is an agreement to determine a set of practices without the child necessarily understanding her/his contribution. For instance, Arthur when agreeing to his informed consent laughed and answered 'of course you can do it' while Christos started teasing and joking with me answering initially 'No' and then started laughing and saying 'I was teasing you, hahahahaha...you can do all of these ... I know how it is! I will take with this one and you will take with that one (showing the cameras)'. It is really important to reach that level of understanding - even if children have not been fully aware of what research means, at least they felt comfortable and appeared to enjoy the whole process.

Hill (2005) also recommends that in the case of a participant who is not sure if he wants to be involved, it is better for them not to contribute. Hill (2005:69) and Alderson (2004: 106; 2005) summarise the information that informed consent should include for all participants the right to say 'no' or 'yes' or 'stop', the right to withdraw at any time without any effects, issues of confidentiality and anonymity, the safety storage of the data, methods, risks. If ethics are theorised as an effort to keep 'balance between opposite extremes' (Alderson, 2004: 97), then due to the fact that they are dealing with unknown inconvenience and matters during the research, it is not the older child (Clark and Stanhal, 2005) that can engage in the research rather than the younger but the relationship with the researcher and the peers as a whole that gives a notion of what co-construction means. Additionally, as James (2007) argues, in research with children in educational settings, the notion based on age differences can be harmful for the production of data. It is the sharing

of meaning (Conroy and Harcourt, 2009) as being experienced by all parties that is significant.

As far as whether the term ‘assent’ or ‘consent’ should be used, Flewitt (2005) agrees with the stance of Alderson and Morrow (2004) that, although the British law puts under debate the age that a child can be defined as competent, children are able at all ages to respond to their wishes. Flewitt (2005: 556) writes about ‘provisional consent’ pointing out that informed consent just gives a brief view of what is going to be happening. Unpredictable events are going to take place during the projects. The term ‘provisional’ reconciles issues of advocacy and mutual respect between the researcher and participants. Flewitt (2005a) divides the whole process of the gaining of a participant’s agreement in three steps:

- **initial consent** and not assent (children and parents negotiate their rights before starting)
- **provisional consent** (children and researcher agree for the rules)
- **ongoing consent** (children may show negative reaction and discomfort during the project)

Informed consent is therefore an ongoing procedure and children have the right to withdraw from the research process any time that they wish to (Alderson, 2004, 2005; Flewitt, 2006, 2005; Hill, 2005; Alderson and Morrow, 2004). However, in some cases the time limit may restrict opportunities to negotiate with children about their desire to participate or not (Hill, 2005). This aspect becomes more complicated when the adult in charge of the child has a different opinion. One perspective is that as long as the parent or the teacher has given the denial or agreement for research to take place the matter is closed, but this perspective does not recognise the rights of children to determine their own participation in research.

Bearing in mind the Convention of Children’s Rights (UNCRC 1989) and due to the fact that all participants should be taken seriously in the decision making process, in research with very young children, getting permission only from adults that are responsible for children is not enough. Although the whole process may cause the loss of some time and data in research, it is a worthwhile process to follow as the relationship between the researchers and the researched is built upon an ethical stance and indeed there were children that after having experienced the process, decided not to be full participants, making it clear to me how they would like to participate. For instance John, when he had



been asked to sign the informed consent refused saying: 'I don't want to do all this things you asked me. I can only tell you when you can take pictures of me'. In that case I do not count those findings further in the research and leave aside the case of John continuing with another child. Similar was the case of Eleni in Greece. Although her mother was the first person who signed, during the research Eleni finally showed that she was not interested in the process despite the fact she signed the informed consent. Hill (2006) has found that there are children who consider their time for play more precious than participation in research, in which case we should view critically the adult's initiative in the project. Alderson and Morrow (2004:46) assert that the opt-out process is more complicated than the opt-in process in relation to the matter of privacy. Usually when a participant is taking the decision to opt into the research the collaboration between the two starts without any particular issue of intrusion into the participant's lives. The opt-out process appears to be problematic when the subjects do not want to participate but their lives are invaded by the researcher's request to participate.

### **Ethical considerations with visual data**

Goldman (2007: 7) asserts that in using video data the researcher should move beyond the 'colonialist past' which wanted the researcher to act like collector of events and objects to generate knowledge (Guillemin and Gilliam, 2004). Particularly with visual data, the researcher's relationship with young children is a sensitive matter of respect and privacy and for the researcher to know where exactly to stop filming and which information to publish (Flewitt, 2006; Clark and Moss, 2005; Derry et al., 2010). Goldman (2007) also points out another parameter in ethical research with video moving beyond privacy and anonymity: the danger to multiply and replicate the same tool in a different context without considering issues of diversity (Waller, 2006). Fortunately, it is not only the researcher but the children themselves that remind the researcher which techniques to use, where to start and to stop exercising agency (Corsaro, 2005a) as the following examples show. For instance children in England did not let me take video of the tower – 'their hidden place' (see also Burke, 2008).

### ***First event***

*The children were under the tower, Allan was there. I am kneeling, keeping the camera in my hands "Hey!! Hey!! No bip!" Allan tells me. I stop the video. He waves at me to "Join them now".*

***Second event***

*Jennifer was playing with her doll, I was video filming her. Practitioner Jane was looking at her as well. Jennifer became shy, hiding her face “Don’t take a picture of me” she said and I turned off the video.*

***Third event***

*I was sitting with Maria on the mattress taking a video of children playing with the bike. Aspasia is having a disagreement with Christos and she says a ‘rude’ word. A*

*Practitioner was listening to her and she tells Maria off. Maria and I are the audience for the event “You stop it!” Maria says and she puts her hand in front of the lens.*

The three events above show how children under three are aware of the video filming process and they are entitled to remind me where to stop and where to start, showing full awareness of the whole process. As Dockett et al. (2009) state, children are not homogeneous entities and construct different meanings and so in research with children, it is necessary for the researcher to be flexible not only in the matter of children’s perspectives but also to let them direct her in the methods and in the way that they are going to be involved (Flewitt, 2005a). Burke (2008: 26) states that the involvement of children into the research with the use of visual data may create the meaning of ‘visual rights’ related not only with the techniques but also the length of access in children’s culture and the knowledge that the researcher can keep. The example of Allan, for instance, shows that the camera is not permitted into those spaces - which means that I have been invited to join them but without collecting and publishing data. There were many other times when children invited me to join them and video film but after a certain time the children banned the camera and just asked me to play with them without collecting data.

Flewitt (2005) advocates negotiating the methods used with children making it clear to them their right to opt out from the research at any time. The children had also the chance to become familiar with the methods used while time for exploration was given to them and become fully informed (Flewitt, 2006; Derry et al., 2010; Goldan-Segall, 1998; Harcourt and Conroy; 2005). I did not care whether or not the children stepped in front of the camera or stood up with me viewing what I was filming laughing and moving the lens. I wanted my research to be as naturalistic as possible, always bearing in mind that my appearance and role was part of the setting’s reality in any case. The above process gave

children the opportunity to demystify the use of visual methods and to define their role as active agents and not objects (Thomson, 2008). Additionally, negotiation took place with children regarding the matter of the time consumed and to what extent their play with peers will be affected. It was the child himself who decided if he would like to stop playing and talk with me. In this way, the child's informed consent became a more ongoing process and I reduced the time of the project, adjusting it to the needs of the children (Flewitt, 2005a).

Confidentiality and anonymity should be guaranteed in any document (Derry et al., 2010). Coad and Lewis (NECF, 2004) state that any finding that creates an ethical consideration in research should be excluded from the research data. Confidential issues also arose during the discussion with children relating to issues of when an adult is present. However, this issue is determined from how open or not the whole procedure is and to how trustworthy those involved in the research are. I could see that children's attitudes changed once they saw any staff from the setting come close to us. Often children started whispering, or stopped talking or just moved away.

Despite the fact that anonymity is standardised by changing the names of the participants, actually in the visual methods another ethical issue has arisen - participants can easily become recognisable (Flewitt 2006; Derry et al., 2010). Flewitt (2006, 2005a) argues that although children change and grow over time, participants' main anxiety when they were about to be videotaped was the fear of loss of control. In this respect and for the purposes of the consultation and interpretation of the data, she encouraged all the participants to choose their pseudonyms and to watch some selected visual data and to make their own comments. Although, the whole process demands time for the participants she contends that the process was valuable in order for participants to feel more comfortable. Additionally, Flewitt (2006) mentions the possibility of 'fuzzing' or reduction of the pixel count so as the children's faces cannot be easily recognisable. However, in this way many of the bodily and basic facial expressions are missed out (Derry et al., 2010).

Hill (2005) raises a number of additional ethical issues such as how a researcher should act in cases that abusive events are unveiled or one child verbally or corporally abuses another child during the research. Pertaining to the matter of harm by the research findings, Hill (2005) advises the researcher to be particularly careful in the way that the results are presented, so issues of confidentiality and privacy be kept as promised and that the researcher is certain that nobody is going to use the results to exploit the participants. For

this reason, Hill (2005: 75) suggests three elements in research design. Firstly, research must retain the ‘public confidentiality’ which means that the researcher must not reveal the name of the participants in any presentation or report. Secondly, for ‘social network confidentiality’, there is a need for a researcher to be particularly careful not to transmit any information to friends, family or people that know the child. Here, Hill (2005) notes that families and teachers often demand to have access to the data that is gathered. Reassurance in that case should be confirmed. The meaning of the confidentiality should be identified exactly to all participants. The final element that Hill (2005) emphasizes in the ethical pitfalls in research process is: ‘the party breach of privacy’. Fundamentally, it is a particularly complicated task in spontaneous discussion. From the one hand the researcher tries to achieve the unprompted involvement of the children and from other part he has to limit and control manners that may create trouble for participants- though any incident of abuse or exploitation should be reported straightforwardly.

Despite the fact that anonymity is standardised by changing the names of the participants, actually visual methods have the disadvantage of not concealing the participant’s identity (Flewitt, 2005, 2006; Derry et al., 2010). In this respect, all participants according to the review of literature, should choose their own pseudonymous. However, when I asked the children to choose their pseudonymous some of them did not give any answer while others like Maria got upset saying ‘My name is Maria and I like it as it is! Don’t call me another name!’ The children in many cases appeared to be offended by asking them to change their name, mentioning issues of identity. Hence I decided to give names that are not chosen by them in the published data. Conroy and Harcourt (2009), for example, came to a similar decision in their research with children under three.

Encouraging participants to watch some selected visual data and to make their own comments and recording their comments has been a prevailing principle (Flewitt, 2005a, 2006). In visual data the fact that children are young and by the time the results will be published their facial and bodily characteristic will have changed (Flewitt, 2005a, 2006). If parents and children are not comfortable with this, there is a possibility of covering the basic facial expression. Although, the whole process demands time for the participants the process was believed to be valuable for participants to feel more comfortable (Derry et al., 2010). However, children were not keen to see videos at all the times but they preferred to see the videos in particular situations.

A final ethical issue in relation to the visual data has arisen with some parents in Greece. Their concern is the issue of children becoming easily recognisable if the video data is published at a local level, for instance at a conference in a local university. This was an issue that was not considered initially in the draft design of the study. Indeed considering that the Greek city has a small population, the children and practitioners could be easily recognisable by other people at the local level. This is an issue that concerns not the only children but also the practitioners. For instance, considering that some staff in the English case were students at the local University, imagine if the DVD with the visual data of the thesis were viewed by several classmates. Additionally the audiovisual data has got the capability to capture peripheral events such as practitioners' dialogue in the background about issues that should not be published in any case. All the above issues show that conducting ethical research is not only a matter of taking the ethical agreement of the University ethics committee into account but is a more complex issue (Bone, 2005). In that case confidentiality and anonymity is ensured by limiting the access (Derry et al., 2010).

Being reflective at all times during the research (Cocks, 2006) and capturing the 'ethically important moments' (Guillemin and Gilliam, 2004: 262) is an essential principle in doing research with children. It has been argued that informed 'consent' or 'assent' must move beyond the notion of complacency after gaining the written permission from ethical committees, parents, practitioners and children. It is when the journey of the ethical research starts and it is related not only to the children but to all participants. If the 'assent' or 'consent' is a relationship of trust and reciprocity (Cocks, 2006) then it is the whole process that should be scrutinised until the completion - moving beyond the code of the ethical committees approvals (Bone, 2005) respecting not only the children but also all the adults that are involved. Additionally, it has to always be recognised that different settings have a different ethical culture and the researcher has to respect that if she wants the research to be based on ethics, as understood by Dahlberg and Moss (2005), as a space of care and understanding. Moreover, in doing research with or without visual data, a researcher has to move beyond the issues of anonymity and privacy and reframe the role she is playing within the whole context (Goldam-Segall, 1998) and not be viewed as a visitor who collects data but as a person who is sitting and sharing the meanings with all participants and respecting all the parts, especially when some of them (like practitioners) are silent due to the researcher's position as a 'well qualified' pre-school teacher. As Bae (2009) states, it is not only the children but also the teacher who may be in a difficult position and the researcher should be reflective about that.

### 3.6 Reliability, Validity, Pilot Study and Generalisation

Reliability refers to the ‘consistency of the research’ (Docket and Perry 2007: 50). For Brooker (2001: 168), reliability is ‘the issue of whether the research findings could be repeated, or replicated, by another researcher or at another point of time’. Although she notes that for research with the same group of children this achievement is not possible as they grow up and changes are inevitable. With regards to validity, Brooker (2001:168) argues that it refers to the instruments or tools that are used and to what extent they measure what was intended. Issues of validity thus relate to the question ‘how do we know that this instrument measures what we think (or wish) it measures?’ (Punch, 1998: 100). In doing ethnographic study with children, validity accommodates the notion of what seems to be ‘true’ (Siraj-Blatchford and Siraj-Blatchford, 2001:204; Edwards, 2001). As Silverman (2005:211) argues the main question that a researcher should have in mind for the validity of the research is ‘how are they going to convince themselves (and the audience) that their “findings” are genuinely based on critical investigation of their data and do not depend on a few well-chosen “examples”’. Silverman terms this as ‘anecdotalism’. As Hughes (2001) and Edwards (2001) argue the meaning of validity interrelates with how the meaning of knowledge is perceived. In the interpretivist paradigm validity is correlated with ‘the true voice of the participants in their research’ (Hughes, 2001:36). Silverman (2005) argues that the problem with ethnography and the description of an event is related with researcher’s criteria of choosing an example within the field notes. It is questioned to what extent this particular example could be representative and to what extent it does not lose its original meaning after being extracted from the raw data.

Brooker (2001), as with Edwards (2001), argues that triangulation will be particularly beneficial in measuring children’s responses. Silverman (2005: 212) terms triangulation as ‘the attempt to get a ‘true’ fix on a situation by combining different ways of looking at it or different findings’. However he states that the problem with the triangulation is that the same tool is not always used to measure the same thing.

Brooker (2001) recommends that during pilot studies the instruments should be tested. In the following part I shall present how the pilot study enforced changes on the whole procedure and the used participatory tools for the actual research.

Two pilot studies has been carried out, one in the England and one in the Greece. The focus was on the techniques, observation, informed consent, digital blue camera, video film observation, photo diary. The pilot study carried out in a way to be as close as possible to the real context. For this reason it took place in the actual setting allow me to try in practice my equipment and the procedure, working with the actual participants letting the research to move smoothly. Initially I had divided the routines as:

- welcome time
- meal time
- free play time
- circle time
- directed activity
- preparation before any activity
- good bye time

Then I took pictures of each activity intended to be discussed with all participants (parents, children and practitioners). Those pictures were some corners of the rooms with children doing specific activities believed that the depicted children will be familiar with the material and the activities and will be motivated to talk. The children refused to make any comment on the showing pictures. I tried then to use a doll telling them that it was a visitor wanted to know what kind of activities they do like the most. However none of the children pay any attention to me they rather ignored me completely or grasp the doll and playing. Then I tried all the above pictures to be presented in the whiteboard that was available in the English setting so as children to speak. However children were more focusing on the laptop and on the light that was on the roof rather than on what I was interested in. In another day using again my laptop to show the pictures taken by children themselves, they were more focus on playing with the keyboard of the laptop rather talking about the pictures. Additionally showing the same photos to all participants, parents and children (photos taken by me) the focus was completely different and the adults' comments were not sharing the same interest with the children losing the triangulation.

Asking also children to tell me their comments on the pictures (taken by me) I found them leave me alone and get involved on their own activity. Giving also to the children the audio recorder they started playing with the button rather than give me data. Furthermore asking children to go a tour showing me where they would prefer to stay and play more or what

they would like to do there or dislike, they avoid me completely. On my intention also to make a map asking to children ‘in which activities you would like to spend the most of your time in pre-school’ the children completely ignored me. Preparing also a poster with pictures of different activities in the nursery school asking children to put a stick or a stamp to that one that they like the most showing playing outside, play with block of buildings, meals, free play, organised activities children grasp the stamp and the stickers and they were focusing on the process of sticking rather than showing to me their perception on the activity. The personal also diary that had been disingering for each child had been rejected straight away by them, some also of them they just grasp my pen making drawings and turning the paper on the backward doing their own pictures.

Children’s control and engagement in the research process is therefore influenced by a number of factors. Firstly, as Docket and Perry (2005) argue, researchers working with young children should question whether the tools are relevant and appropriate to the enquiry of the research. Secondly, researchers should evaluate how important and beneficial the research is for children and to what extent it represents children’s perspectives in an authentic way (Docket and Perry, 2005: 519). Also, as Hill (2006: 76) states, children are able to see advantages and disadvantages in each method that is provided by adults, young people show preferences towards some methods and not to some others. Therefore, Punch (2002) claims that is difficult to find the ideal methods for research with young children due to their varying preferences. Hill (2006) argues that children’s views on the methodological tools are akin to adult’s. Their responses are influenced by their social position, their relationship with the adults, the time, the space and their cultures of communication.

To support the above claim, it is worthwhile reporting a small episode from a pilot study. A girl (age 4 years old) was asked to take some pictures with a digital camera as part of the process of ‘training’ the children to use the cameras. She took just one photo and after a couple of seconds she gave the camera back to me saying: “I don’t like it”, then she said: “but I would prefer you take picture of me with your camera”.

Angeliki: “Have you decided where you would like me to take a picture of you?”

Jacky: “I will show you”

The girl then walked around to the room standing up in different areas taking a particular pose. This activity produced 16 pictures and occasionally some other children joined her.



Every time that a picture was shot taken she was asked to see it, make comments such as “hmhmh...here I am pretty”, or “nice”, or “gorgeous, I like my blouse”. When on another day the same girl was asked by me to repeat the same process the number of pictures taken was only six, although during that time many children were in the garden playing outside of the room and she could easily have extended the space. It was noticed that many of the pictures were taken in front of the door. When the child was asked about her choice of the door, she refused to answer.

In the above episode it appeared that the girl was not keen on using the camera herself. However, she exercised agency by asking the researcher to take pictures of herself in different areas of the room. Here it is clear that when the researcher is engaged in a task which has been requested by the child there is a significant difference to the situation when only the child is involved in the task. As Cook and Hess (2007) argue, children’s intentions are usually different of those of adults and children’s pictures are not always interpreted effectively by adults. The interpretation of the photographs from adult’s point of view creates many doubts about the validity of the collected data especially when are analysed only from the perspective of the researcher (Punch, 2002). The domination of adults is a significant factor in the research design. Cook and Hess (2007) claim that despite the fact that the camera motivates children to express themselves, giving adults an aspect of children’s perspectives and their world, in fact the construction of the camera is a limited tool well embedded into adult’s research intentions and leaving out a wide selection of children’s narratives.

Therefore, one significant weakness of many ‘participatory’ methods is the fact that the starting point is adult’s interest and not children’s; specifically if the aims and objectives are not defined by children themselves (Hill, 2005). Hill (2006) has found that children are particularly sensitive to the whole framework of the research design and many times when the research takes place in educational settings, their responses are influenced by the norms, habits and beliefs that are embedded in the whole functional regulation of these institutions (see also Christensen and James, 2000). For instance during the pilot study (above) it has been found that often children’s play has been interrupted by adult intrusions asking for children to stop playing as there is ‘tidy up’ time or ‘snack time’.

Thus the above techniques has been changed and kept as following in the actual research:

- The focus of observation: In the initial design the focus was on the organised activities. In the actual research the focus changed to observe one child at a time. The change was due to the construction of the programme- more flexible in England (every child had the opportunity to choose within different activities) more restricted in Greece (all children are doing the same activity at the same time).
- Informed consent (in England and as such kept in Greek setting). The initial informed consent was designed as a booklet story together with pictures. It was too long and children focused on putting stamps on the pages and not on the story. As such, in the actual research informed consent was reduced to a one page A4 poster. This did not appear to be problematic in either case. However, the process of gaining informed consent was changed during the actual research.
- The digital blue camera (in Greece this was replaced by a digital camera). The digital blue camera was replaced only in Greece by a digital camera - not during the pilot but it became an issue during the actual research. It was also an instrument that took longer for both children in England and Greece to get used to.
- Photo diary or book making was rejected in both cases. The initial intention for the child to choose the picture taken by researcher or himself depicting the programme of the day was declined by both children in England and Greece. In Greece it was also problematic to keep on track simply because there were no pre-planned activities to be filmed. However the photo diaries were integrated with the parents' interview and gave a better understanding of parents' information.

As Yin (2003) states, during the data collection what is very vital for the validity is for the researcher to use different sources (video, interviews, participatory methods), finding connections between the evidence (sources connected and referring to the same event) and having key people for discussing the evidence (practitioners, parents, children). As such the potentiality to use different sources of evidence to search the same phenomenon is based on triangulation (Yin, 2003).

As Siraj-Blatchford and Siraj-Blatchford, (2001:204) argue, in ethnographic research with children what is important for issues of validity is to see what is true from children's point of view and not from the adults' or researcher's point of view. As such validity is 'based

upon our perceptions of ‘worth’ and hence upon our value systems’ (Siraj-Blatchford and Siraj-Blatchford, 2001: 204). Yin (2003) notes that another criterion is the internal validity (ibid, 34) which interrelates with the potential to find out what causes one phenomenon or behaviour (interpretation of the results); how one event leads to another event and to what extent the researcher is sure that the existence of a third parameter did not influence the participants’ behaviour and actions. However, it should be mentioned that in research with children what is important in the interpretation of data is what is shared with the child as collaborative production (Danby and Farrell, 2004) and that ‘valid data can tell a different story in different context or at a different times’ (Docket and Perry, 2007: 49). Langston et al. (2004) state that as long as children are researched in their own surroundings the validity of the data is really priceless compared with data collected in experimental situations.

### *Credibility and Reliability*

Another issue in research with children is to what extent adults are sure that children reveal their own version of events and not what they think adults want to hear.

Coad and Lewis (NECF, 2004: 27) refer to this issue as ‘credibility’:

‘To the extent to which it is believed that the response has come from the child. So a child may appear to put forward genuinely a particular viewpoint and yet that response may lack credibility i.e. it is felt that the child is, for example, echoing what she has been told by an adult. The concept of credibility is very close to notions of face validity and tends to be used by researchers working with interpretative research designs and methods’.

(NECF, 2004: 28)

Additionally, there is a further discussion around the issue of the child’s ‘trustworthiness or reliability’. Reliability here is referring to ‘the idea that the child’s input/response is representative, or a fair reflection, of what the child believes’ (NECF, 2004:28). Docket and Perry (2007) argue that the above issue is problematic not only in research with children but also in research with adults. For instance in my study I found a lack of consistency in adults’ (parents’ and practitioner’s) responses rather than in children’s responses (see for instance Chapter 4 section 4.1).

In terms of eliciting ‘trustworthy’ comments from children Dockett and Perry (2007: 52) recommend that the child–researcher ‘is involved in ongoing interaction’ and builds up a kind of affiliation with children and their social environment in order for the researcher to understand the whole context. However, Morrow (2005) found that when she asked children to report back her findings the responses were different from their initial responses within the context. Dockett and Perry (2005) therefore suggest that researchers ask children who participated in the research to check again the text produced and to encourage them to delete or add new information. Another way is for the researcher to check the frequency of the same responses (Robbins, 2005). Dockett and Perry (2007: 52) call this aspect of the children’s role ‘member checking’. In this way the verification of the data is taken from children’s perspectives.

Although, at this point it should be mentioned that the child may not always be willing to respond to adults’ answers and especially for the very young children this could be impossible (Waller and Bitou, forthcoming,). In such cases the researcher should triangulate the perceptions, discussing with practitioners and parents or looking for other elements that could give a further explanation. For instance the present study found that Greek and English children were not happy to watch the videos taken of the circle time. The Greek children reported to the researcher that they did not like these videos, while the English children just decided to leave. However such an attitude does not mean that refusing to make a comment is not valued. For instance Wiltz and Klein (2001) found that children referred much easier to good events rather than to bad experiences. Additionally, Wiltz and Klein (2001) argued that their observations showed that children experienced what was seen by the researcher to be unfair treatment in the nursery but these events were never reported by children. Thus, suggesting that it can be much harder to elicit negative perspectives from children in early years’ settings. This factor could of course be related to the normal adult-child power dynamics within the setting rather than the research process.

Danby and Farrell (2004) argue that in research with children because it is mostly qualitative it has been characterised as not able to reach to generalisations whereas there are some concerns about which children are included or excluded from the research for instance how the researcher chooses the children that are going to participate. However, the researcher should not underestimate the meaning of informed consent. The child, similar to the adult, can show and decide whether or not they want to participate (see further section 3.4 ‘ethics’). Despite the fact that some times they are happy to participate in the project, their parent’s consent eliminates their decision. Hence, it seems that

‘children’s desire to participate as emblematic of adult governance of children’s lives’ (Dandy and Farrell, 2004:39). To that issue the above author recommend researcher to re-affirm together with the child the ongoing process protected in this way issues of power and status. In general, they recommend that researcher and children must interpret together their daily lives and experience.

### *Generalizability*

In research with young children generalizability refers to the strategies, methodology and tools and not to the results (Docket and Perry, 2007) while Hill (2005) states that generalisation can be made in some general aspects of childhood and to specific groups of children living under particular circumstances. Punch (1998) argues that a meaningful question is whether or not generalisation is desirable as the main aim of the study. Indeed my intention was not to generalize my findings but to understand and see with a different eye the complexity of the child’s life in association with the activities. As Punch (1998) contends, generalization is associated with the purpose and the way the analysis of the findings is occurred. As she states, the purpose of the study should be conceptualised (ibid, 154) which means to try to interpret the case under different concept(s). While the way that the analysis is conducted is associated with the proposition if the same aims and concepts are applicable to another situation. In research with children methodological tools should be chosen carefully. Contradictory criteria are whether are adapted to children’s interest and whether they promote reliable results without using gimmick equipment (Docket and Perry, 2007).

For instance, Dockett and Perry (2007) use reflexivity to control the researcher’s subjectivity and factors that may influence the interpretation of the data and thus the reliability of the results. In the same way my research has tended to involve the participants in the interpretation of the data using the digital devices as reflective tools. For instance the video data has been shown to the children and adults and the data gathered was discussed further with practitioners. Also, the involvement of the parents was intended to reduce factors related to the researcher’s subjectivity.

Hence, despite issues of generalisation, credibility and validity the use of different methods and strategies, does not only correlate with the triangulation of the data but firstly and mostly with the engagement of the child, who has a different view of engagement in the research no matter if she is a verbal communicator or not (Dockett et al., 2009).

Regarding matters of subjectivity and objectivity in the interpretation of the children's experience, Greene and Hill (2005) state that reflexivity is one important process but again there are limitations to how researcher's personal experiences from their own childhood may effect the interpretation of the data and to what extent they are affected by contemporary ideas about childhood. Despite all these limitations they assert that it would be valuable at least to make an effort in understanding children's experience but this process demands the use of multiple methodological tools and to keep in mind that all children do not have the same experience. Additionally, Edwards (2001) argues that the researcher's presence can inevitably change the reality and in that case the researcher's appearance become 'part of the case'. Hence it is important for participants to spend time to get used to the researcher and the techniques. Greene and Hagan (2005:11) argue against the role of the investigator as 'flies on the wall' asserting that a researcher must not be 'neutralized' but should be immersed in the life of the setting in order to see children as participants in the whole process of research.

## **Conclusion**

From the description of the above techniques it is clear that they are all interrelated. For example, the digital photographs cannot stand alone without the written or video data, as with the telephone discussion and the building blocks. All the above visual techniques offer a different way to communicate and build understanding with children (Thomson, 2008). The combination of observation and other visual data in educational settings is essential to eliminate the drawbacks of observation (Silverman, 2005) as has been described above and permit a researcher to freeze the scene, 'repeating' the observation, reflecting and understanding more deeply the culture of each setting. It has been found that research in early years settings can lead to an 'overload' of information and these techniques may help the researcher put events in order and check the accuracy of the written description. It sounds bizarre, but it happened during the time I was researching in England that I wrote down in my diary different children to those who were in the video itself. The video in this way helped the researcher to see the events in the original sequence, thus checking the reliability of the field notes. Simply, it focuses the researcher's attention on the accuracy of the written data (Goldman-Segall, 1998; Plowman and Stephen, 2008) and helps the researcher to see observation as an exploratory stage (Silverman, 2005).

The 'frozen scene' capability of the image in the digital camera was also appreciated by the children. The lack of production of video material (3 in total in England) by the children was not due to a lack of ability but due to preferences. Panayiotis for instance in the Greek case clearly stated to the researcher that he can take a video (he was showing me how) but he mentioned that he prefers to take only pictures. It is not clear why children prefer taking pictures instead of video but it has been found from the observation that when the picture is frozen for instance on the focus object - the pizza (Allan's example), the child was keeping the overview of the screen seeing and admiring again and again the desirable picture. Additionally, the child moving the camera is keeping stable the overview of the picture but when it is video the image is moving and the children often became frustrated. Hence the digital photos appeared to give the children a sense of stability while the video film did not.

Children's preference was also to look at an overview of the image on the screen of the camera and for children who were less able to express their wishes verbally this was a possible indicator of their perspective. Hence moving beyond the production of bookmaking, as has been proposed by Clark and Moss (2005), it has been found that the use of camera with a foldout screen let the children speak about the pictures or show their feelings in a here and now situation without needing to wait, thus also capturing their spontaneity. Forman (1999: 1) terms the process 'Instant video revisiting' (IVR) where the child can see the event in the same place and context as it happens immediately and not after hours or days. Forman applied the technique in video stills while in the present study the technique has been applied to all visual data prepared by the researcher or child respectively. IVR has also been used as a reflective tool for children and practitioners to understand the meaning and the consequences of the conflicts (Hong and Broderick, 2003).

Additionally video has been seen as a useful tool to capture the voice of those who are not capable to express their perceptions verbally as 'it can pick up different sort of 'voices' and place them in dialogue with each other and with a range of images' (Haw, 2008:204). For instance Flewitt, (2005b) and Plowman and Stephen (2008) found that especially in the preschool, language is not the only way of interaction but facial gesture, eye gaze, touching are also significantly important. It is what is called 'video pedagogy' (Tochon, 2007) as a way to connect 'voices', construct understanding and doing reflection. The approach is not only referring to participants but to the researcher herself. Goldam (2007) discusses a 'perceptivity framework' (ibid, 15) in the use of video in social research. This term consists of four elements -Epistemology, Ethnography, E-evaluation and Ethics. The

significant role of this framework is based on the idea of sharing the video with those who are videotaped. The perceptivity framework pays attention to the process mostly and then to the results as Goldman (2007:15) said characteristically 'we can share the shooting, editing and interpretations with those we study. We can even decide to involve the community in the design of the study to ensure that each stakeholder group has an opportunity to represent a range of perspectives'. This theoretical framework is moving from small events to more consequential results.

However, in research with children under three years old their involvement in all stages of the research is particularly difficult. It is an ideal, but practically it is problematic. Children can refuse to take video, to see the video because simply they are doing an activity more important at that moment, they may not want to take video and interpret it not because they are not willing to participate in the research, but because it is not in their own culture to become part of that process or they are not interested at a certain point in time. For them it is more important to play with their friends or to continue their activity, or they may remain silent without wanting to comment about the attitude of an adult (Weiltz and Klein, 2001). Indeed in two noteworthy events I asked children about a situation where a child was 'told off' by an adult. The answer of Christos was 'whatever' shaking his hands and showing to me that it was not worth commenting further.

Nevertheless, in many of the cases the fact that children were aware of the researcher and her role in their own space seemed to encourage them to interact during the time the video filming took place, putting limits indicating to the researcher where to stop, or asking the researcher to come to take video or a picture. The sharing of this data with practitioners and parents would then appear to have been relatively straightforward. However the issue of stakeholders arises. For instance in the case of England, the children's centre internal regulations did not permit the researcher to share video material with parents. Ethics and the sharing of video material is therefore a complex and sensitive issue, as discussed in detail in the section on ethics, above. Here, the practitioners insisted that the parents did not want other people to see their own child while they also expressed concern about what would happen if a parent was not happy with the activity that the child is doing, possibly creating problems in this way for practice in the setting.

On the other hand being a traditional ethnographer, staying in one corner of the class keeping notes and writing up a diary gives again a subjective interpretation of the data (Emerson et al., 2007). In research with young children the involvement of the children can



take on different features. The researcher is coming with his/her own agenda but children can change it and adjust it to their own needs and interests. For instance, when the children encountered difficulties in the use of the digital camera, they asked me to take video and pictures for them.

The 'perspectivity framework' of the video is particularly flexible and easily adaptable to different theories and methods and interpretation. Here the consideration is to try to eliminate the role of researcher as a 'conspirator' on the presentation of other lives (Goldman 2007:16). For the validity the researcher is sharing the data with others. While for the researcher's subjectivity, during the transcription of the audiovisual data and data synthesis the notion of 'present moment' (Stern, 2004) is used to note down the feelings that the video created at the time that transcription is taking place and correlated with the reflective diary and participant's comments (see also Emerson et al., 2007). All practitioners in both countries mentioned that through the video they 'see' parts of the child that they have never seen before while in the English case there was an intention to apply this method to their own way of working.

As Haw (2008) states, in the use of visual data issues of technical, relational, creative and potential for change should be considered and the 'truth' is that practitioners view children's attitudes through these videos and pictures as they progress and make changes in the day care centre (especially in the English case). Furthermore, the video and visual data leaves many possibilities for different ways of seeing and interpreting the same event and connecting the different points of view (Goldman-Segall, 1998). What is remaining in that case is to connect those different points of view into one shared meaning and if not full understanding, at least to come closer to what the participant means (Goldman, 2007).

Clark (2004) agrees with the views of Christensen and James (2008) that all these participatory tools are acting as a means between the researcher and the child while the process helps the researcher to better understand children's lives. Pertaining to the matter of the interpretation of the data, Clark accepts that there is no one 'true' meaning while the adult's intervention may present the data with a different perception to that of the children (Waller, 2006). Hence, the involvement of young people into the elucidation and the construction of meaning is essential.

## Chapter 4.

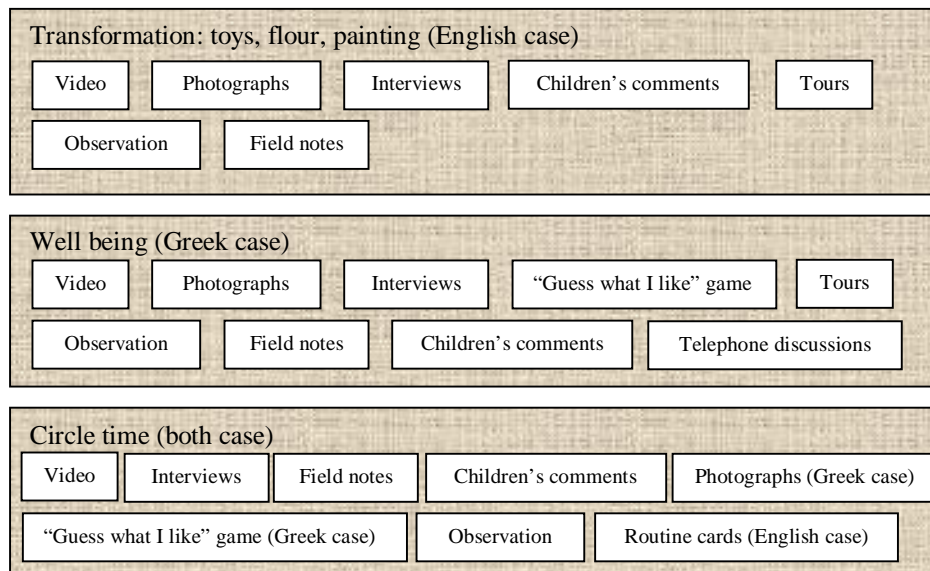
### Findings and Analysis

#### Introduction

This chapter will report and critically discuss findings from the research in the settings in England and Greece. Different types of evidence such as images from video and pictures taken by the researcher, field notes, participant observation, participatory techniques such as digital blue camera, games such as ‘Guess what I like’, the treasure basket, telephone discussion, building blocks, discussion with children and interviews with practitioners and parents have been used and synthesised, as Table 4.1 (below) shows.

**Table 4.1 The mosaic of the events**

Table 4.1 The mosaic of the events				
Symbolic and Material Culture: The Wolf, Santa Claus, Folk music(Greece)				
Video	Photographs	Interviews	“Guess what I like” game	Tours
Observation	Field notes	Children’s comments		
Mature activities: digger, plastic tools etc (Both cases)				
Video	Photographs	Interviews	“Guess what I like” game	Tours
Observation	Field notes	Children’s comments	Treasure basket (Greek case)	
Curriculum and outside area: bikes, trolleys, trees, wooden house, bee (England)				
Video	Photographs	Interviews	Children’s videos	Telephone discussions
Observation	Field notes	Children’s comments	Tours	Routine cards
Building blocks				
Handicrafts: height, ownership, duration etc (Greek case)				
Video	Photographs	Interviews	“Guess what I like” game	Drawings
Observation	Field notes	Children’s comments	Treasure basket	Tours
Age segregation: caring (English case)-Exclude (Greek case)				
Video	Photographs	Interviews	“Guess what I like” game (Greek case)	
Observation	Field notes	Children’s comments	Tours	



The table is labelled a 'Mosaic of the Events' showing the themes, the chronological order of each event together with the different tools that have been used. Each of these themes has been identified, based first of all on children's comments or invitation and then connected to the evidence of the field notes, observation, parents and practitioners comments. Each theme, for instance 'Wolf' in the Symbolic and Material culture is further subdivided (as the Table 4.2 illustrates - see Appendix B). Additionally the Table 4.1a (see Appendix B) shows what the data is, the volume, the time, numbering and dating of the video data.

The data shows that even if some themes are common there are variables in the meaning and what the children experience in each setting. For instance, age segregation appears to indicate a sense of caring for the younger children in England (Ian's case) but, for the children in the Greek setting, it means the exclusion of younger children from their peers' play and space. The 'mature' activities generally have a common meaning in both settings demonstrating children's intention to get involved in the adults' activities. However, the children (Christos in the Greek setting and Jennifer in the setting in England) experience the use of real materials differently due to the different structure and resources of each programme. The handicrafts are a topic strongly identified by children in Greece. This does not mean that the children in the English setting do not make handicrafts but it was the Greek children that raised issues around these activities and not the children in the English case.

Conversely, the outdoor boundary (fence) was identified by many children in the English setting but the children in the Greek case did not play in the garden in the winter and it was

therefore not a relevant topic for them. The variable themes identified by the children demonstrates how children in these particular settings are focussed on particular aspects of the curriculum and how their perspectives are not necessarily correlated with the daily routines of the setting but with their own personal concerns and interests. For all participants (children, parents and practitioners) pseudonymous are used, while for ethical reasons any events that are sensitive are not fully reported but just documented as “stressful events” (see for instance Table 4.2, Appendix B).

## **Findings**

Video evidence of directed and non directed activities has been transcribed and analysed; 410 minutes (7 hours) in England and 501 minutes (8.5 hours) in Greece. The difference in the duration is related to the length of directed activities such as circle time, arts and crafts, and group games. Initially The length of the video analysis was not considered as the focus but on themes identified by the children. Considering that the majority of the activities are directed in Greece, such as circle time, rhythmic activities and art and craft, the duration is inevitably longer than those in England. For instance in England a child like Jennifer could be involved in a craft activity but she was never observed to spend more than three minutes on this activity. However, children in the Greek setting tended to sit at the craft table for an average of ten minutes. Additionally, children in the setting in England have the opportunity to move to more than two activities within five minutes. Hence, 30 videos focused on Arthur, 25 on Ian and 31 of Jennifer in England and in Greece there were 26 of Maria, 26 of Christos and 25 of Panayiotis. These were all analysed and discussed with practitioners. The differences in the quantity of video films is related to the duration of the activity, the frequency the child changed an activity and how much choice is given to them to change their activity.

The visual data (photographs taken by children and video material recorded by myself) appears to show that for the children in the English setting, the most popular activities are those which are not directed. Bikes, wheelbarrows and scooters (the terms are those as used by practitioners in the setting) have been depicted in children’s photos on many different occasions. The boundary fence also has been depicted and commented on many times. In the English case the majority of the pictures were related with the outside area and not the inside area. Pictures taken inside only included the tower house, which was the children’s ‘hidden’ place and the tunnel taken by Ian. For Ian this was related with his effort to help a younger child to play in it. There were also three pictures taken by Jennifer of the pegs that were connected to circle time, but it was a child initiated activity.

The differences in the quantity of the pictures should not be seen as problematic, but as a result of the construction of the programme and pedagogy. The use of camera can be associated with how much freedom the child has to choose activities within the programme. Looking at the Table 4.3 (below) it can be seen that in the Greek case there is only one picture of the snow while there are 43 taken of the roof (through the window). Both groups of pictures are interrelated with the outside area.

**Table 4.3 Visual data taken by the children**

<b>Photographs taken by children in Greece</b>				<b>Photographs taken by children in England</b>		
Height: 24	Circle time 36		Doors: 6	Bikes scooters wheelbarrows : 24	Door: 3	Fence 21
Shoes: 35	Wolf game 8	Real tools 11	Crafts 30	Younger children 14	Nature 31	
Sea: 3 (broken cars constructed as sea)	Lights 7	Roof- outside area 43	Snow1/ Stepping on the chair: 1	Digger 2 pictures,/ 1 video	Circle time 3 (pegs)	Dogs 4
Drawer 15	Turtle 9	Carpet lines 14	Grocery shop: 40	Tower 7 and requested 13	Traffic signs 11	Tunnels 5
Table: 21	Building blocks:6	Story books: 7 and (6 of wolf )	No videos taken by children in Greece	Video taken by children : 3 videos in England		
Total 323				Total 138 (not including the videos)		
<b>Tours in Greece</b>				<b>Tours in England</b>		
2 directed				5 walking with and without video tours with Ian		
3child's initiatives				3 with Jennifer, 5 with Arthur, 5 with Allan		

The 43 pictures Christos took within two days showed his intention to bring items closer that he could see, but he could not touch. In the event with the snow children were stretching their hands to touch and feel the snow, while the practitioner had already announced that they are going to go in the garden for the first time and play with the snow. Permission to see the snow by the window was also given for the first time. As Panayiotis appeared to want to concentrate on the experience he took only one picture because he realised that he cannot feel the snow through the camera. He looked at the snow once through the camera and then raised his hands to touch it. He gave the camera back to me saying 'I want to touch the snow! Take the camera back'. Hence he asked me to collect the data for him. Similarly, in the garden none of the children took any pictures, preferring to enjoy the snow. The children confirmed that they enjoyed the garden but no data had been produced by them. Seeing the video of the outside area taken by me, they were laughing,

asking to see it again and again while occasionally they were going close to the window looking at the sky saying 'it will snow again soon'.

At the very moment that Panayiotis took the picture of the snow in the classroom reporting to me that he preferred not to take any more pictures because he would like to enjoy the snow. It seems that on the occasions when the children were really enjoying an event they did not produce visual data, preferring to concentrate on their own programme. However, they were really happy to discuss their experience afterwards (Waller and Bitou, 2011; Bitou and Waller, 2011).

The evidence from the video data suggests that, especially in the case of the programme in the setting in England, children have more choice for exploring the resources and equipment and opportunities to change an activity during the organised programme, in contrast with the setting in Greece. Another factor should be mentioned here. In England, Arthur did not produce any photo data while the majority of the visual data came from Jennifer and Ian. Ian and Jennifer attend the setting on a daily basis while Arthur only attended on a Monday and a Tuesday. Arthur invited me on many tours to find conkers. It seems that he mostly enjoys moving around and discovering things rather than taking pictures showing his preferences differently. Additionally, Arthur was able to express himself verbally more easily than Ian and as such he was able to report his preferences orally. In Ian's case the 11 pictures he produced about the traffic signs appeared to be an attempt to make other people listen to him (see Section 4.3).

Hence, children in England invited me to follow them on tours more times than children in Greece. This should also be interrelated to the fact that children in the English setting have more free time than the children in the Greek setting. However, children were often busy with their own activity and were not interested in producing data. For example, there were many occasions in the English case where children stopped me from collecting data and asked me to join in them and play together. Table 4.3 (over) shows the number of pictures taken for each activity. The pictures were not taken accidentally but they were shared with me and connected with video or field notes. Only these pictures have been considered as valid data. In the previous section, the following categories were identified as common or unique issues in both countries.

- The wolf, Santa Claus, Religious, Christmas party → Symbolic and material culture

- Use of real or plastic material → mature activities
- Being with or without children of other age group → Age segregation
- Height and Handicrafts → Ownership, spatial restrictions, duration
- Circle time
- Wooden house, the window, the snow, Boat, fence, bee, bike, aeroplane → Curriculum and outside area
- Transformation → Agency, child's contribution on the planning
- Well being

The symbolic and material culture has been defined as a significant aspect of their experience in the setting only by children in Greece, regarding the matter of how it is used and embedded into the daily programme. In England similar symbols could be seen 'Dora the Explorer' (Jennifer) and 'Bob the Builder' (Arthur), although they will not be reported further here. It has been found that they are related to the influence of the Media and TV and similar symbols have also been found in the Greek case such as 'Spiderman' (Christos), 'Dora the Explorer' (Dafni and Anastasia). However, the symbolic and material culture is analysed in more detail for the Greek case due to the fact that 'the wolf' as 'super hero' play needs further explanation.

The extent to which children can participate in mature activities has been identified as a theme in both cases. The mature activities, as with the material culture, were not part of my initial research focus. It is exclusively the children's orientation and for this reason this aspect will be analysed more in detail. Similarly, the age segregation is being understood differently in both settings and it appears that the different perception is interrelated with the difference in the structure of the programme.

The theme of handicraft will also be analysed and presented more in detail within the Greek context due to the complexity that has been identified. The interesting point in this theme is that it has been defined differently by the children, while my intention was initially to focus on the directed activity. The children did not reveal their perceptions during the activity but during peer play and interaction as drawings, video data, tours and a 'guess what I like game' show. Although, it should not be forgotten there are differences within the structure of the crafting process in both countries. For instance, a child in England is free to make crafts as she wants while the child in Greece is expected to follow instructions, as the practitioner demands the crafts to be made in a particular way.

Interestingly, in viewing the crafting video, what was found to concern both myself and the staff in the English case was the monotony of the child's movements. The children repeated the same element, for instance moving the brush, within the activity, on different days, without producing anything, while there are cases where the child does not complete the activity. The discussion with pedagogues shows that the child needed support at that moment but nobody was there to encourage them further. In the English case it has also appeared that sometimes a child produced a craft such as a card for 'Mother's Day' just to please the adult. For instance, Jennifer grasped the card I was making for my mother saying that 'You don't need it! I need it more'. She waited for me to make a second one and she picked that up and presented it to the practitioner as if she had made them by herself. Previously a practitioner had encouraged the children to sit and make cards so that their mother could say 'well done' and kiss them. For a child like Ian who declined to make any, the practitioner answered him 'No kisses? No hugs?'.

However, it has been mentioned before, this understanding is based on my interpretation and not on the child's perception and for this reason the emphasis will be given to what has been produced by children in the Greek case. Interpretation based only in my point of view may lead to misunderstanding (Bitou and Waller, 2011; Waller, 2007)

Circle time is a common activity in both countries and has exactly the same structure in both settings. Children sit together on a mattress everyday singing the same songs, reading stories, discussing a topic. Secondary adjustment (Corsaro, 2003, 2005a) has been observed as a basic tactic for children to avoid the activity. For instance when a practitioner announces circle time, in both countries children will try to grasp a toy they found at that moment and bring it with them to play with during the activity, will ask the practitioner permission to go to the toilet or ask for water. They will try to move slowly – slowly away from the carpet area without the practitioner seeing them.

First, however, more details will be presented here of 'the clap your little hands' event in England, showing that when the adult and children design the programme together participation is guaranteed and there is involvement of almost the whole group of children. It will also be shown how children in England seek alternative solutions and how practitioners reject their recommendations. In the Greek case the children's comments about the circle time significantly challenge the interpretation of the data from my point of view.



The curriculum and the outside area will be mostly focused on in the English case. Firstly, because children in Greece did not normally have access to the outside area during the winter and secondly it has been found that the child's contribution to the planning is more visible outside rather than inside. For the children in the English setting more interesting things appeared to be taking place outside rather than inside. The outside area topic is being based on children's tours and their play with bikes, while the significance of the fence will also be examined in relation to the children's well being and opportunities to extend their planning. The topic of transformation was also observed mostly in England and shows how children can adjust to the planning, surprising the adults. Thus transformation will not be discussed separately but will be considered within all the themes and it will become clear that transformation is an element well embedded in children's intention and competence to make changes within the planning. Opportunities for transformation were found to be very limited in Greece due to the lack of access to materials and sources at all times, the general lack of equipment and restrictions on the use of real or plastic materials. However, the Greek children did try to transfer items during the circle time to avoid the adult's agenda. For instance, when the practitioner went to give water to a child another child stood up and picked up the nearest toy, or they changed position.

From the symbolic and material culture theme it will become clear how symbols like wolf and Santa Claus were used in a conformist way by the Greek practitioner to achieve discipline. However, a child's well being (Laevers, 1994) is in general associated with the challenge of the programme and the provision. A child was found throwing items at the door because they could not leave the classroom, intending to demolish the school 'because it is bad', and preferring to stay at home. The well being theme was also found in the practitioners' and parents' comments in association with the practice. Hence, for the Greek case it seems that the need for reform of the curriculum and pedagogy is significantly important for the parents', children's and staff well being.

## **Part I. The Case of Greece**

### **4.1 When the wolf is about to come – The Symbolic and Material Culture in children's lives and the planning of the activities in the setting.**

'I walk in the forest when the wolf is not here!! Wolf!!! Wolf!!! Are you here?'(Greek popular traditional game)

This section is based entirely on a topic initially identified by the children. The wolf has a symbolic meaning and through the whole period spent with the children I found that the notion of wolf was well embedded in both the directed and the non directed programme of the Greek setting. Both the children's perspectives and parents' comments directed me to this path. The following topics have been found exclusively in the case of Greece. It is apparent, therefore, that the lack of national framework in Greece appears to create some misunderstanding in the way the staff work, impacting on the children's well being and life in the setting. Finally, it is argued that what Corsaro et al. (2002) identify as 'priming events' plays a significant role in understanding children's choices and perspectives related to the planning of the activities, giving more depth to the analysis. Analysing the priming events show that looking at the same activity progressively over time, the activity changes and takes on a different meaning for the children, while the children exercise agency over the adults' arrangements. This section concludes that limited co-operation between the setting and the parents appear to create a number of difficulties and issues in the children's lives in the setting.

*The wolf in the curriculum: 'Are you scared of the wolf?' (Panayiotis)*

The theme of the wolf has central role in many children's narratives and games. The purpose of this section is to report that although in the video selection the children seemed to enjoy the game, in fact from their comments it seems that they are not keen on the role the wolf plays in their lives in the setting. All the children in the setting are protagonists in this thematic topic. Only Christos experiences the role of the wolf in a different way, as his mother has intervened since he started at the setting, due to her occupation (See Appendix B.4.1§1). The story of wolf commences from my first visit to the setting:

***'Are you scared of the wolf I?'***

*I enter the classroom. I sit on the floor and wait for the children to start chatting with me. Panayiotis comes close to me with a red sound book and he asks me:*

*'Are you scared of the wolf?'*

*He presses the button with the wolf sound.*

*'Which wolf?'*

*'This one here' and he presses the button again.*

*'Well ....the wolf is in the forest and people used to hunt them to take their fur, I think they are more scared of us!'*

*Panayiotis looks at me and smiles*

*‘What about you? Are you scared of the wolf?’*

*Panayiotis does not answer me*

*‘Take a photo of me with the book’ he asks*

*I take a photo and show it to him. He smiles. ‘I now want to take a picture of the book’ I give him my camera. He takes some pictures.*

(24<sup>th</sup> November ‘Are you scared of the wolf 1?’ Field Notes)

It appears that this wild animal is part of Panayiotis’ narratives and play on many occasions. The next day I attended the setting he came to me again with the same book and he asked me the same question:

***‘Are you scared of the wolf 2?’***

*‘Are you scared of the wolf?’*

*‘No I am not scared’*

*‘Take this book then - it is yours’*

*‘Ohh thank you ...but what about you? Are you scared of the wolf?’*

*He does not answer me again. ‘Look if you push this button you can hear the sound’ he tells me and he pushes the button of the elephant.*

(26<sup>th</sup> November ‘Are you scared of the wolf? 2’ Field Notes)

However, to be more accurate the story of the wolf started before this, from the first meeting with Panayiotis’ mother about informed consent. His mother suddenly started talking about the fact that since Panayiotis has attended the setting, from the previous year, he has become seriously scared of wolves (see Appendix B.4.1§2). Panayiotis’ mother’s comments before starting the research were really helpful to the way I could approach the child. Indeed the first topic that the child mentioned to me was about the wolf. Therefore, the wolf topic became the focus of this section because it was child initiated, indicating to me the importance of the meaning of wolf in his life in the setting and also correlates with data from the parent interview.

Hearing that I am not scared of the wolf helped to develop a relationship of trust and Panayiotis offered the book with the wolf as a present, in the same way as he played with his mother at home (parent’s interview). However, what should be mentioned here as problematic is that the practitioners’ standpoint was completely opposite from what the child and his mother experienced at home. Although, it was explained to the staff that some children were seriously scared of wolves, both of the practitioners take the view that

they cannot give the children information different from reality. Characteristically one practitioner said:

*‘The wolf is always a bad wild animal that kills and eats. I cannot teach to the child that the wolf is eating pasta. That is the way I am working with the children!’*

*(Practitioner Anastasia field notes discussion after the event)*

Two stories in particular clarify and confirm the children’s attitude towards the wolf. The stories are associated with a possible ‘visit’ by the wolf to the setting. A third practitioner called Eva (that in the previous year had worked with Panayiotis’ group) mentioned that it is the way that practitioners talk about the wolf that makes the children fearful (see Appendix B.4.1§3).

It appears that this wolf story was integrated into the programme many times and the fact that the children were invited to play has created serious concern for the children’s well being, not only in the setting but also at home. However, one practitioner has an alternative perspective:

*‘I think they like playing the wolf, I have seen them play it many times. I think the picture of the bad wolf makes them feel excited!!!’*

*(Practitioner Vera, interview)*

Sometimes the ‘wolf’ is used as a means to prevent children from being at home. For instance, on the 10<sup>th</sup> of February practitioner Vera tried to convince a new child that was in a transition period (from another group of children) not to cry by mentioning the wolf:

***‘This one...here...is a bad wolf.....I will break his leg!!’***

*It is snack time. The children and I are sitting at the fruit table.*

*Practitioner Vera carries a newcomer in her arms.*

*‘I want my mum!’ The child says, crying.*

*‘AAAAaaaaah..... We cannot go to your mum. Look! The bad wolf took your coat and now it is cold outside...that is true kids, isn’t it?’*

*She turns to us – appearing to want confirmation from the children.*

*The children do not answer her. Panayiotis looks at her without saying anything.*

*After a while when the practitioner goes to the foyer, Panayiotis indicates the wolf in the corridor to me.*

*'This one...here...is a bad wolf.....I will break his leg!!'*

*'But his leg is already broken' (I tell him - looking at the pictures).*

*'He falls down' (Panayiotis)*

*'Where?' (Researcher))*

*'In the lake and he gets drunk' (Panayiotis)*

(10<sup>th</sup> February, *'This one...here...is a bad wolf.....I will break his leg!!'*, Field Notes)

Pictures of the wolf and Little Red Riding Hood decorate the wall of the common area right opposite the table where the children have their meals. One day, a practitioner from another group warned her children that if they did not eat their food the wolf that is there (on the wall) would come and eat their food, at the same time she was knocking under part of the table (28<sup>th</sup> November 'The wolf is coming', Field notes). From the above events it seems that the wolf is being used in this setting as a control device to get the children to conform to the practitioners' authority (Smith, 2004). However, despite the fact I informed the practitioners about the concerns of some parents' relating to the role the wolf plays in the setting, in practice they did not seem to consider this fact and they kept using the Wolf as part of their programme.

Children, on the other hand, treat the wolf badly. In the video of 16<sup>th</sup> December the children have transferred the Christmas nativity into their play in wolf's den and they are in a panic trying to save their babies. Their den is under the table, while the wolf's den is in the nativity. The only child that does not participate is Christos, as he is not scared of the wolf (mother's report). All the rest of the children participated in the game. The children occasionally move from the table to nativity to protect their babies and interrogate the wolf. In the following event Panayiotis is standing up in front of the nativity asking the wolf 'why?'

### **'Why wolf?'**

(2:54)-*Why wolf?? .....why wolf????(Panayiotis says to the wolf)*

*The rest of the children come and join him*

*-Why wolf??(Eleni says and slaps the wolf. Maria looks at the nativity)*

*-Nooooo Nooooo, it is going to break down (Practitioner Anastasia tells them once she saw Eleni slap the nativity and she tried to make them go away).*

(16<sup>th</sup> December 'why wolf?' MOVO6061, Video data)

The practitioner did not pay any attention to the reason why children treated the handmade nativity badly but to what children were actually doing (practitioner's interview). According to her point of view, the children were trying to destroy the nativity. Thus, she prevented them from being there. The nativity was made by another practitioner without the children's participation. Maria, Aspasia and Eleni knew that is the den of the Jesus, as the videos of 11<sup>th</sup> December MOVO6008 and MOVO6010 show. However, for children the nativity is not Jesus' den but the wolf's den that deserves to be treated badly. For this reason they interrogate and slap him. The wolf is also treated badly in another event on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of January. The children are sitting at a table looking at a book that Eleni has found with a wolf in the story. Panayiotis just looks at the others without making a comment (see Appendix B.4.1.4).

What makes sense from the above video is the mocking way the children punished the wolf 'dadadadadada'. In their daily life and peer interaction they had never been observed before speaking and acting in this way. Corsaro (2003: 142) has discussed 'mocking the system', if the wolf is part of many stories, games and icons in children's lives in the setting then here children are mocking the wolf's status. Additionally, it has been reported by a member of staff that in the previous year some of the children (who are part of this research) were attending a group where a practitioner often scared children by saying 'the wolf is coming!' Viewing the video material Practitioner Vera said that children often played the wolf and she mentioned that last year when they were in the same group Panayiotis again used to be scared. She also described how last year Panayiotis started crying when he was listening to the song 'I walk in the forest when the wolf is not here' in the same way as practitioner Eva had described the event previously (see Appendix B. 4.1. §5 and 6). When the practitioner was asked what exactly she used to say to the children, she said that she was trying to convince them that the wolf would not come in the setting and she was playing the game 'I walk in the forest' to make them get used to the wolf, so as not to be scared. However, what has been found problematic is that the field notes and the other members of staff comments did not correlate with what this practitioner asserts.

The misunderstanding of these narratives related with how the practitioner uses the wolf story are confirmed through parents' and the other colleagues' comments. The field notes show that many times in the practitioner's narratives, the wolf is 'about to come in the setting'. When the practitioner was asked about the possible principles of her planning, she stated that she was not sure about that (see Appendix B.4.1.§6). From her narratives however, she seems to follow a behaviouristic model, trying to make the children get used

to the ‘bad wolf’. From the above events and quotations it appears that the wolf is part of children’s narratives due to the directed activities the practitioners apply in the setting. What causes concern is the misunderstanding of the practitioner’s perception of the children’s attitude towards the wolf. Despite the fact that the practitioner experienced Panayiotis’ dislike of that game the previous year, instead of putting a stop to the music on the radio she increased the frequency, thinking that in this way the child will get used to the wolf. She also misunderstands the fact that in Panayiotis’ play this year he often took the role of the wolf. She also mentioned that she has never shared with parents the topics and issues related with her pedagogical way of working.

All the video data shows that during directed and non-directed activities Panayiotis plays the wolf without any problems. For this reason in the analysis of the video data Maria’s perspective will be presented as an example of secondary adjustment because her comments show a disagreement that has been misunderstood initially by both myself and the practitioner. Panayiotis’ perception during the video is not clear as the child follows the instructions. Hence the same video is analysed twice, focusing firstly on Panayiotis’ perspective and then on Maria’s perspective.

Returning to the video data, it seems that occasionally children play the wolf in a manor different to the traditional story. For instance, on the 23<sup>rd</sup> January event, which is not part of the organised activities, children obviously treat the wolf badly. For these children the wolf is bad and deserves to be punished. Although Maria sees the spittle and said that the wolf is crying as result of the slapping, for Christos the wolf is not crying and deserves to be slapped. However, this idea about the wolf also derives from the directed activities. In many cases a practitioner plays the game where children are walking in the forest and the wolf goes to catch them up. Additionally, in the children’s stories there is the spirit of the bad wolf. Moreover, on the wall on the centre there are icons of the wolf. The question is if in children’s emerging picture of the curriculum the wolf is there, then most probably the emerging understanding is that the wolf is bad and what is bad deserves to be punished. Maria’s mother reports that her child pretends that she is scared of the wolf in her games, but in a mocking way (see Appendix B.4.1§7). However, she mentions that during the transition period she experiences with her an event where the child wanted her to count by ten so as the wolf would leave. Comparing Maria’s mother’s narratives with my field notes, it seems that children regularly experience stories that have horrified them in the setting.

Maria and Christos appear to have been demythologizing the status of the wolf, based on their parents' comments. Indeed in the above video (23<sup>rd</sup> January) Christos and Maria are pretending that they are horrified by the wolf and they punished him for that. In this way they show their strength over him. However, for the other children such as Panayiotis, it is not clear what he is thinking. He is silent while many times Eleni and Aspasia said that they are scared of the wolf ('Guess what I like' game 23<sup>rd</sup> of January. Panayiotis, Eleni and Aspasia have attended the same group since last year).

When returning to the 10<sup>th</sup> February, the events related with the wolf were not finished in Panayiotis tension to 'break Wolf's leg'. It seems that the practitioner's comment about the coat started to worry children and further activated their imagination. Sitting still at the table and waiting for snack Dafni called me to follow her. Maria and Aspasia follow too (Appendix B, 4.1§8). Dafni invited me to show the icons of the '*Bad wolf*' and the '*Little Red Riding Hood*' but in the flow of the event, it was the knocking on the door that scared them (Audio DM200059 10th February).

Starting from the practitioner's comment that the wolf came and took the coat of a child, the children wanted to investigate further where the wolf had been coming in the setting. The children needed to know. The 'bravest' members in the group, Christos and Anastasios, came to investigate whilst the others tried to get away. However, after the door opened, Dafni wanted to see exactly where the truth is. Once they came back in the room they asked the practitioner to play the game 'I am walking in the forest when the wolf is not here' (Appendix B.4.1§9). Maria was one of the most fanatical supporters of that request, as the video shows. There is also paradox to the whole story.

The findings of these videos, instead of clarifying children's perspectives show that they are confused and therefore raise some concerns about which is the best way to capture the children's perspectives. Panayiotis participates through the whole event. It should be noted here that in all these cases Maria and the rest of the children are happy asking the practitioner to play the game. In the video 10<sup>th</sup> February 'I walk in the forest when the wolf is not here!' (MOVO6624 - see Appendix B.4.1§9) all children participated actively in the activity. They are singing, they are walking and they are following all the rules of the game. The impression from the video is that the adult sees that the children (specifically Panayiotis) enjoying the activity. The practitioner confirms this view in interview. The only sign of disagreement is seen in Maria and Aspasia's fight, which appears to come out of the blue. However, when the children (Maria and Panayiotis) are asked about the video



and the game their attitude shows that they are not at all keen on the game, as the following comments demonstrate:

**Panayiotis' comments**

*Angeliki: Hey Panayiotis shall I show you a video to tell me if you like it?*

*Panayiotis: Yes....come and sit here (we sit on the floor)*

*I start the video with the wolf...*

*Panayiotis: I don't want to see that video put another one on.*

*Angeliki: Which one do you want to see?*

*Panayiotis: That one with the ball - not this one.*

(10<sup>th</sup> February, Field Notes)

Panayiotis declined to watch that particular video. That could mean that the child's interest was in an event different to the researcher. The event that Panayiotis wanted to see was during his free play, when he was trying to reach the ball that was trapped on top of the curtain. Maria's perception was similar. Both children avoided making any comment about the video of wolf, either because this topic worried them (Weitz and Klein, 2001) or because they are not interested in the focus of the researcher's interest (Waller and Bitou, 2011; Waller, 2007).

**Maria's comments**

*Angeliki: Maria I took a video of you playing the wolf would you like to see and tell me your opinion?*

*Maria: Yes but I will tell you my opinion on another video not this one....*

*Angeliki: Which one?*

*Maria: Do you want to play what I like?*

*Angeliki: Ohh yeah, let's play that game....hmmmmhm...you like it you like it to read books*

*Maria: Yes I like it!!*

*Angeliki: You like it you like it to sing a song on the mattress!*

*Maria: No I don't like it!*

*Angeliki: You like it you like to play "I walk in the forest when the wolf is not here"*

*Maria: No I don't like it!*

*Angeliki: You don't like it? I though you like it?*

*Maria: I don't!*

*Angeliki: But you asked miss Vera to play that game!*

*Maria: No I don't like it!! Can you understand what I am telling you!!*

(10<sup>th</sup> February 'Guess what I like' game, Field Notes)

Panayiotis' perspectives are clarified better when his mother has been interviewed (see Appendix B.4.1§10). She identifies that Panayiotis is not keen on the wolf and in particular, that game. She believes that Panayiotis participates in the game due to his peers. This study has found that in the Greek case the children were selective in the video they wanted to watch. All of them declined to watch the circle time and organised activity videos, while they were really keen on videos that showed them playing during their free time.

It has also been found that after playing the second round of the game 'I walk in the forest when the wolf is here' they started fighting. Maria is the protagonist of the fights. Comparing the videos of the Candy canes (24<sup>th</sup> November 'the candy canes', *MOVO5759*, *video data*) with the videos of the wolf games it has been found that when children really enjoyed a directed activity. They never created any conflicts during the time they were playing. However, in the 'I walk on the forest when the wolf is not here' on 10<sup>th</sup> February (also 4<sup>th</sup> March video data) Maria often creates conflict with her friends. Although I thought that Maria most probably did not like the video due to the episode with Aspasia, in fact the meaning is completely different. After two days of Maria playing the wolf game, on the 12<sup>th</sup> February I sat with Maria and Aspasia during the breakfast and asked her to clarify her reaction:

### **Maria's comments**

*Angeliki: You know Maria....*

*Maria: What?*

*Angeliki: Yesterday night I was watching the video you were playing with Miss Vera, the wolf...and I saw you were upset. I think you had a disagreement with Aspasia*

*Maria: No I did not!!*

*Aspasia: No we didn't!!*

*.... the two girls are hugging each other*

*Angeliki: All right....because the other day you told me you are friends with Aspasia and I was wondering... why?*

*Maria: Do you know why I was upset and after I was in the single bed?*

*Angeliki: No I don't know...*

*Maria: Because I wanted Miss to catch me and I was tired!!!!*

*(Maria was shouting now!)*

(12<sup>th</sup> February, Field Notes)

Maria wanted the practitioner to catch her so as to go and sit at the table and become a wolf. Indeed in the video of 4<sup>th</sup> February (MOVO6710) Maria's point of view is clearer. From what Maria reports it seems that she was getting tired from the long duration of the game (5 minutes in total) but she was not sure how to withdraw. Going and playing another game may make the practitioner notice her. She does not normally display an offensive attitude; her mother and the practitioner confirm that as a character she is particularly dignified and she easily gets upset when they make comments about her. Thus according to her character she is trying to find a dignified way to withdraw without the practitioner asking her to go back. The only way is for the practitioner to catch and place her on the table. However this does not happen and Maria gets upset trying to find another way to withdraw from the activity that according to her opinion lasts too long and is the same all the time.

What is significant about Maria's comments when she said that she did not have any disagreement with her friend is that her comments support Corsaro's (2003:146) strategy of secondary adjustment, in particular 'the make-do's' (adopted by Goffman) is confirmed by Maria and Anastasia themselves. 'The make -do's' is a strategy where children already use rules and routines, such as playing the wolf game all together in a manner that is officially accepted by practitioners, for instance participating in the activity but making up an event that can cause delay in the activity such as getting upset with a friend. Here the two girls were delaying the flow of the game by mentioning a personal disagreement. Additionally, Panayiotis' mother reports that Panayiotis never accused his friends in his comments at home, even if he came back after a serious fight he always gave them an excuse saying 'it was not their fault' (Panayiotis' mother's comments). Furthermore Maria's mother said that Maria wanted to go to the setting only to meet her friends. Bearing in mind Panayiotis' mother's comments and Maria's mother comments together with children's comments, it is apparent that children's fights during the game are because the children do not agree with the wolf game in the setting.

Furthermore, it also seems from the video data (especially the 4<sup>th</sup> March) that the children play a different version of the game to the adults. For instance, video data (4<sup>th</sup> March 'My

*gun is Struklan'* MOVO6711) shows Panayiotis as the wolf and the rest of the children trying to save themselves, this time they use guns and they manage to kill the wolf. The video MOVO6711 shows how children imagine the role of the wolf during their 'free play'. However, in the next sequence of the film, the practitioner decided to intervene when there is a disagreement over guns. The practitioner asked the children to keep them away while the children wanted to keep them and kill her. In the second part of the same video the children's intention is to play the game with their own rules using guns and weapons against the wolf. Anastasios tries to make a last effort to keep his gun with him but the practitioner rejects his desire. The rest of the children are silent. It is not clear what they are thinking but, as the video shows, initially the children obey and follow the practitioner's directions. The problem comes up when Maria gets upset for the reason 'I wanted practitioner to catch me'. So in the rest of the video it became clear that children created issues for conflict during the time they were playing with practitioner. Finally, although the practitioner tries to prevent children from using guns, the children invent their own way to kill the wolf. Despite the fact Maria creates a situation of possible conflict, together with Aspasia, she uses scissors, while Anastasios and Christos use bombs! (to kill the wolf). In 4<sup>th</sup> March *'My gun is Struklan'* MOVO6711 video data Maria and Aspasia are using weapons against the wolf. The practitioner ignored their actions and keeps playing the game following her own traditional way of playing.

The last part of the same video describes how children managed to use secondary adjustment to become the wolf and turn the rules of the game around. Initially, the practitioner intervenes in the children's games and she discourages them from using the guns and asked them strictly to put them away. The children try to keep their guns but the practitioner discourages them. The children initially start playing in the well known traditional way but soon they create a situation that makes the practitioner become more flexible with the rules such as practitioner becomes a child walking in the forest while children become wolves (Corsaro, 2005a). Corsaro (2003: 158) argues that practitioners become more flexible with the rules and the routines by 're-creating' new more flexible rules in order to achieve children's participation. For instance in the above event, the practitioner seeing that children wanted to play the game differently, lets some of them become the wolf and she takes the position of becoming a child in the forest.

It would be easy for those who support the importance of the symbolic meaning of the wolf in children's lives to say that it is connected with fear and can be related to the field of psychological analysis. However, from the observation and the way children are playing

the ‘wolf’ there is discordance between the way that the practitioner plays the game of the wolf and the way children play during their ‘free play’ or with practitioner as the wolf. In their own ‘wolf play’ the children kill, hit and shout at the wolf, while in the practitioner’s game the children try to save themselves from the wolf, not because they choose to play the game in this way but because practitioner decides on that. The children’s roles in their own game are more dynamic and energetic while their role in the game ‘I walk in the forest when the wolf is not here’ is more sedentary. The practitioner’s game represents the ‘innocent and vulnerable child’ while in children’s game where the wolf is ‘suffering’ from the children because the children have the power to make him to disappear, represents ‘the competent child’ (James et al, 1998). This appears to be the reason why the children create conflict and trouble during the time they play the game with the practitioner.

However, based on Maria’s comments at the 16<sup>th</sup> February (Audio) the children are not happy with the practitioner’s intervention in their Wolf game all the time. For example, in the video 16<sup>th</sup> February (MOVO6692-93), the three protagonists of the game Maria, Aspasia and Panayiotis have started playing the wolf. The whole event lasts 16 minutes. In the first part the three children are playing together speaking occasionally to me who holds the camera. The practitioner decides to intervene in the game by playing the role of the policeman. When the practitioner puts the spatial borders and new rules in their game the two girls gradually start to withdraw. Maria said ‘No’ to the practitioner but Aspasia, for fear of going against the practitioner’s orders, continues the game by gradually collecting more toys on the table (the practitioner also confirms this during an interview). The spatial restrictions the practitioner directs to the three children were depicted in the photographs Maria took at the time. When they watched the video of 16<sup>th</sup> February with Panayiotis playing the wolf (in the conversation reported in Appendix, 4.1§11), Maria appears to be bored with playing the same game all the time and she wonders whether that is right. Her discussion of this aspect is particularly sophisticated. Additionally, in their narrative the two girls create their own den that is far away and nobody can see it and touch it, bearing in mind that previously in the above video the two girls were trying to find their own den as the table has been banned. The scissors are mentioned here in the same way that appears in the video of 4th March. They have got scissors and wings to go up there to their own den. They mention also the chance to be told off by a practitioner in case they go against to her rules. Obviously, children often follow what the practitioner says but gradually they are trying to withdraw without any conflict.

Reflecting on the episodes of the ‘Wolf’, data it would appear to show that children are in the process of changing the routine of the setting. There is a general tension in the demystification (Barthes, 1976; James, 2005; Corsaro, 2005a) of the curriculum as this is embedded in the story of the ‘Wolf’. The demystification of the activity is also directed to the demystification of the status and the role of the wolf as this is embedded in the programme.

The children’s decision to play the game of the wolf in directed or non directed activities is after a strong disagreement with the practitioner (the events are not mentioned in details for ethical reasons). Thus seeing the event chronologically and exploring all the incidents through the field notes it has been found that the prior events appear to play a significant role in children’s decision to play the wolf. The table of the Mosaic of the events (Table 4.2, see Appendix, B) shows how the action has happened chronologically correlated with different methods on the same or a different day. The topic is the same – the wolf. Looking at the events from left to right and horizontally, it is clear how the faulty meaning becomes visible in the last event where Panayiotis is searching for the Red Book. Starting from the first events on the 24<sup>th</sup> November the prior event seems not to be correlated with the fact that Panayiotis is asking me to take a picture of him with the book. In the event of the 4<sup>th</sup> March I get closer to Panayiotis’ shared meaning with the Red Book. I ask him if he was trying to find something and he said ‘the book with the wolf’. I indicated to him where it was, but he said ‘I don’t need it anymore’ (he had already played the wolf with his friends).

Looking at the Table 4.2 (see Appendix B) of the Mosaic of the events, all of them appear to be correlated with stressful prior events. For instance on the 16<sup>th</sup> December the children transfer the handmade nativity into wolf’s den, as previously Maria had been scolded by a practitioner because she brought perfume from her home (Corsaro, 2003, 2005a). In the event of 10<sup>th</sup> February, in the common area the practitioner has mentioned that the wolf came and took the coat of another child. The event of the 10<sup>th</sup> February is correlated the most with the wolf events. Here there is a possibility that this event is associated with the transition period of the children based on the field notes and Maria’s mother’s comments. This means that the stressful priming event is not correlated only with what become visible to the researcher but with events that happened months or even a year ago and for this reason activate the children’s request to play the game with practitioner. In the Figure 4.1.1, (over) there is a graphical representation of the events of the 10<sup>th</sup> February. The arrows show how chronologically during the same day the priming event progressively

appears giving the faulty sharing of meaning in the video data. The misunderstanding is captured when the individual child is talking or refuses to talk about this particular event. The interpersonal is referring to a parent's comments which challenge the faulty shared meaning together with the interpersonal relationship between the child and the researcher, the researcher and the parent, the researcher and practitioner. The institutional is referred to in the game as part of the curriculum and how the practitioner states that children enjoy the activity and the spirit of the wolf and for this reason is embedded in many routines and interactions in the day care centre.

Analysis of the evidence from the events of the 'Wolf' suggests that capturing the real meaning of the events is a very complicated process. For instance, in Figure 4.1.1 (over), it is explained graphically how the prior event depicted in the present events has been misunderstood by adults. Taking the example of Panayiotis in the first event of 24N. He introduces the red book to me with the sounds asking me if I am scared of the wolf. The initial impression is that Panayiotis is interested in that book. In that case the event would have shown that Panayiotis is interested in reading this particular book. When in the video of 4MG MOVO6707, Panayiotis goes to the shelf to try to find the red book (1:04min) this book then takes on a different meaning because of the stressful priming event. Panayiotis is not aware that the book has been placed in another area on the top of the wardrobe (I can see it as I am close to that area). He cannot find it and thus he pretends that he is the wolf. Without the prior events and child's comments the pedagogical documentation can lead to possible mis-representation of the child's perspective. During the 'Guess what I like game' Panayiotis mentions to me that he does not like the red book. I was surprised and I thought that this game is not working for Panayiotis, challenging the reliability of the game. However Panayiotis has got his own perception of this book, it is in his hands every time he has concerns about an event. These concerns are not easily visible as Panayiotis did not express his perception clearly and verbally.

One finding of this research appears to be that a lack of shared experience between the setting and family creates many issues in children's lives, while at the same time points attention to the pedagogical documentation. It seems that the prior events and child's comments are significantly important for the analysis of the visual data, as very often it has been found that children participate in the activity not because they are keen on that activity, but in order to work according to adult's expectations giving a faulty shared meaning (Figure 4.1.1). It is also argued that the status of wolf presents considerable differences between the directed and non directed activities while children seem not to

agree with the spatial arrangements and rules that the practitioner makes every time she intervenes in their play (as in the case of Maria). The children have transferred the wolf game beyond practitioner's expectations but when the adult tries to bring the game back to the initial way of playing they try to find their own way to withdraw.

However, the prior events and parent's comments give a 'richer' understanding of the meaning. Following Corsaro's and Rogoff's theory about children's contribution to the activities, from the above events correlated with the wolf, children's efforts to change the role the wolf plays in the setting are becoming clear. In addition to that, the children are trying to change the way they are playing the game by taking a more active role or creating conflict and disagreement during the time they play despite the fact that they have chosen to play that game (secondary adjustment). For the above findings the mosaic of the events plays a significant role in the capture of children's perspectives (see Table 4.2, Appendix B). For instance Maria's words that they were not fighting with her best friend but they were tired indicates a clearer picture of the video of the 4<sup>th</sup> March event where the children's intention was to change the way of playing the wolf. From the whole mosaic of the event it becomes clear that children are trying to cause changes to the material culture, working sometimes according to adult's expectations and other times in their own way.

Following the Emirbayer's and Mische's (1998) model of agency, children exercise their power in the old pattern of the Wolf, the traditional songs, Santa Claus, and religious considerations. Children are keen on some of them (for instance traditional and religious songs) but for some others children are trying to exercise agency (Wolf, Santa Claus). On some other occasions their participation is determined from the temporality of what is called 'variable and changing orientation within the flow of time' (Emirbayer and Mische, 1998: 964), which means that the structure of the activity change on the flow of the interaction with peers and adults as all together they share knowledge and contribute differently on the sharing activity (Rogoff, 1990, Corsaro, 2005b, see also Chapter 2).

However, it should be noted that this model and interpretation exists for these particular children with their particular history (Corsaro, 1990). The old pattern comes from the previous experience of the child's individual history or collective history in the day care centre, from home and a combination from home and the day care centre. All these components determine their perspectives and actions towards the directed and non directed activities in terms of their participation (or not).



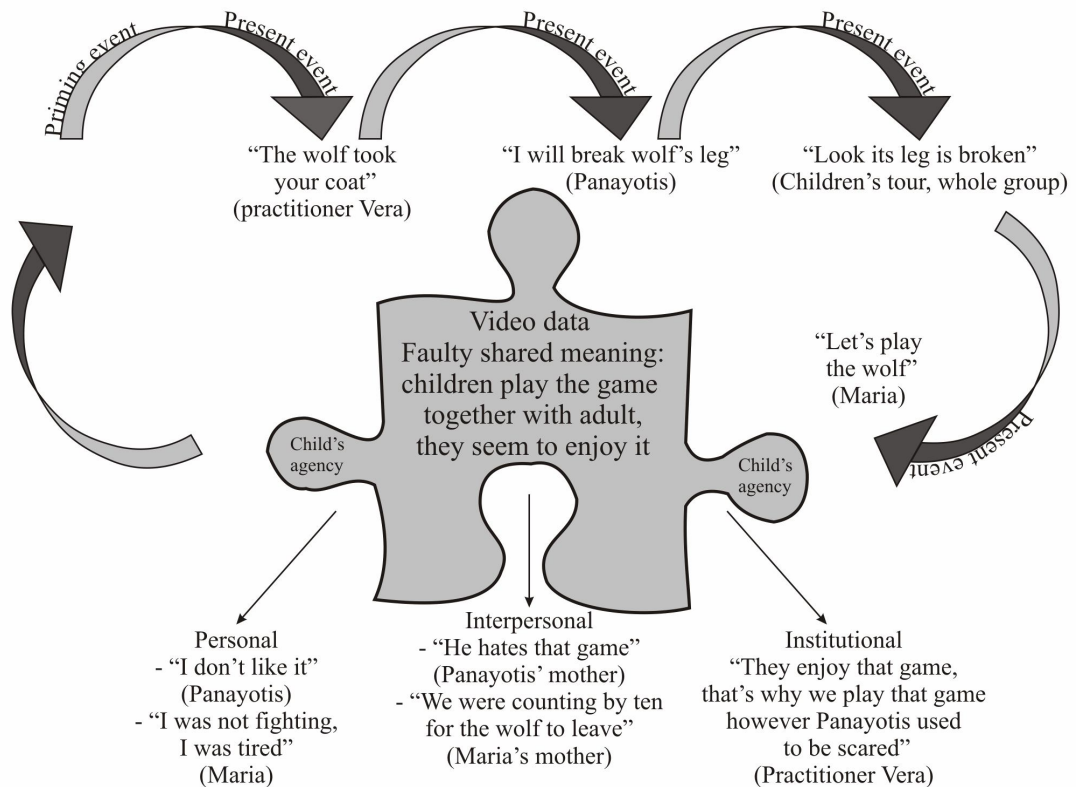
In the case of the Wolf episode, it is clear that there is a differentiation between how the children play Wolf with their peers and how they play the Wolf game with an adult. Children were not observed playing the game in the way practitioner introduced it to them. They also do not sing the song in their peer play, as it is in the traditional game. The Wolf in the children's play is equivalent to the child and on some occasions in more subordinate position. From the practitioner's point of view the wolf is always the strong, unbeatable animal which represents the popular (old) discourse. However children in all the aforementioned examples appear to exercise paramount effort in changing the wolf's status.

As Corsaro (2005a, 2003) notes, the use of tactics represents the way children become eager participants (or not) in an activity, thus they create (or not) situations that they know that do not influence their friendship (like Maria and Aspasia) but they work alongside the adult's programme in a way that is not going to put them in trouble. Maria as the protagonist of the conflicts during the game confirms that she has got concerns with the duration and the repetition of the same game. Hence the children were trying to replace the game, or at least to change the rules of the game. The practitioner on the other hand is trying to keep the game in her trajectory, demanding the removal of the guns or identifying boundaries.

The children continue to keep the guns in their imagination by using their hands (Corsaro, 2005a; 2003) or creating conflicts respectively or transferring toys to terminate the game. Corsaro (2005b), referring to the fantasy and role play of children in early years' education, has found that when this play is characterised by routine it gives children the chance to improve it due to familiarity, security and also emotional fellowship –an intention to play together with peers. Corsaro found creativity and improvisation in children's fantasy and role play. Applying Emirbayer and Mische's model (1998) of agency he suggests that children 'manoeuvre' improvisation in the fantasy play drawing on shared knowledge from stories in the media or on their replicate fantasy play. Thus, if the wolf game is being theorised as a repeatable game that takes place between these children then obviously the children without following any pre-existing framework improve it through the spontaneity of the moment. Here Corsaro (2005b) argues that paralinguistic cues such as intonation and pitch are used to develop the play. For Corsaro (2005b) the improvisation of the game goes beyond a simplistic notion of imitation or repetition of a past event; basically it involves transformation, extension and adaptation according to the flow of the activity into the present moment. Children share the knowledge of the pre-

existing understanding acquired in the past through different resources such as fairy tales or previous ways of playing and media in a new situation.

Looking now at the pedagogical documentation, the events themselves create some misunderstanding. Figure 4.1.1 graphically describes how the priming event is correlated with the present event, but initially giving wrong impression. The sharing of meaning is faulty and only the extra details from the personal interpersonal and institutional domain can clarify the wrong impression. Taking for instance the example on the video on 10<sup>th</sup> February, the first impression is that the children enjoy the game and for this reason it is part of their free play and adult's directed play. Rogoff's (2003) model of analysis (personal, interpersonal and institutional) is particularly helpful in that respect due to the close communication with the three components, child, parent and teacher. Therefore, it seems that interpersonal and institutional (family with teacher), the keepers of what Mayall (2002) calls 'intermediate domain' in child's lives, do not work according to the child's well being. The lack of co-operation between the family and the staff in the day care centre is reflected in the different approach in connection with the conformist use of the wolf in the day care centre. Thus children (especially Panayiotis) experience discontinuity instead of continuity (Rinaldi, 2006) between the two significant components (family and day care centre). In the misunderstanding of the sharing of meaning Corsaro's theory of the secondary adjustment and child's agency is embedded.



**Figure 4.1.1: Graphical representation on how the priming events determined child's participation activity**

Discontinuities have been found to influence children lives in the present and future respectively (Rinaldi, 2006; Corsaro et al., 2003; Corsaro, 2000). It is clear that the children do not agree with the status of the wolf as the data shows. However the practitioner (even in my first impression) has completely misunderstood their intention to play the game during the directed and non directed activities. Video evidence suggests that Panayiotis participates without any problem. However he refuses to see the videos, he said straight away 'No' or avoided answering when I asked him if he likes wolf, whilst the practitioner's and mother's comments demonstrate his dislike of that particular game. An indicator that the children dislike the game could be the conflict during the directed play (secondary adjustment) and their refusal to see any adult's directed activity related with the wolf.

The practitioner insists that children like the game while the children on the other hand insist they do not. The practitioner misunderstands the children's intention and she plays again and again the same game. She insists that in this way Panayiotis is getting used to what creates fear for him - the wolf (following a behaviourist approach), while at the same time she is not sure about the way she is working. Panayiotis is silent while Maria

rhetorically asks me ‘Do you think it is right to play the same game again and again?’ mentioning their rights. In this way children’s well being is influenced, while the programme is not protecting them. The practitioner perceives the fact that the children play the game in their free play and they request to play it as an indicator of pleasure. Where exactly is the truth? Looking at the priming events (one year ago, some months ago, and some minutes ago) as these have been described by parents, staff and through the observation they demonstrate a strong connection with stressful prior events for children in relation with punishment and wolf’s arrival in the day care centre. Why then does Panayiotis still play that game and read that book? Based on what his mother demonstrates and in connection with Corsaro’s point of view about peer interaction (2005b: 234), it seems that Panayiotis is playing the game due to ‘emotional camaraderie’ or because he does not want to be in trouble going against adult’s expectations. Thus children’s intentions and actions in the wolf case should be seen as children’s challenge to make sense of adult’s directions (Corsaro, 2005a, 2005b, 2003; Smith, 2004).

It seems also that, following Corsaro’s definition, the Wolf, Santa Claus, religious and traditional topics are what he calls ‘symbolic aspects of the children’s culture’ (Corsaro, 2005a: 115). Corsaro defines symbolic aspects as all those beliefs and symbols that transfer to children initially from family and then through the other settings such as family. Rich recourses for these symbolic aspects are the media, literature (fairy tales) and the mythical characters and legends (such as Santa Claus). Consequently, he argues that children in their peer culture (‘the subculture of the wider society’, Corsaro, 2005a: 133) place them under the transformation of the process of interpretative reproduction. In addition to this, Corsaro (2005a: 15) demonstrates the meaning of the ‘material aspects of children’s cultures’, including all those materials such as clothes, books, literature tools and toys. Family is the first mediator of these materials cultures but children after they start attending EYEC and through their peer interaction inculcate them with meanings, hence children extend and change the actions contributing in this way to changing adult’s society. The game of wolf in peer culture seems to take the character of what Corsaro (2005: 154) names as ‘approach –avoidance play’. He identifies approach –avoidance play as follows: ‘is primarily a nonverbal pretend play routine in the peer culture of preschool children in which children identify, approach and then avoid a threatening agent or monster. The best way to get a feel for the approach-avoidance play is to examine an enactment of the routine’ (Corsaro, 2005: 154). In the ‘approach–avoidance play’ is embedded the personification of the fear which however is controlled and created by the children themselves. Additionally Corsaro states that is engaging with excitement, tension of relief but the threatened children are

having an enormous sense of control. Thus the fact that the wolf game is played right after any disagreement with a practitioner is due to the children's tendency to increase and share control towards the adult's authority. Thus whatever creates them any concern in their relation with adults is transferred and takes on the character of routine in their games with peers, especially when they are sharing a common fear.

## **4.2 Handicrafts and the Curriculum**

The video observation, the field notes, children's comments and pictures reveal a wide variety of topics related with the handicrafts and the display area. The selected episodes discussed in this part of the chapter are presented in the context that the three children Christos, Maria and Panayiotis depict in their peer discussion data. This data shows some disagreement in relation to the ownership and spatial arrangements about the crafts made by them or a practitioner. Many times these children were found to be concerned with issues relating to handicraft resources and how to access them. I was also often asked by the children to help them with their problem. The CD player, crafts on the wall, the lights, keys and mobile craft for decoration are the centre of children's interest. This section focuses mostly on the events and videos that children pay the most attention to and not on the organised activities in the setting.

### *4.2.1 Ownership and handicrafts: 'Which one is my aeroplane? Is it...hmhmh... this one?' (Maria)*

The story about the height and the crafts came to my attention on the 4th February when Maria was worried about a hat that the practitioner had made her for the carnival party. However, the description will start with the event of 6th February (MOVO6571 video data) where the whole group is involved and there is a strong disagreement between them. The children are trying to find out which car is Dafni's. Dafni insists that she has made a car, while Christos tries to convince her that the day they made it she was not in the setting (Christos actually is right, Dafni did not attend that day). All the group of the children are involved. The event ends with a practitioner asking Dafni to get down from the chair and warning them that as long as she is on the printing machine, they must be quiet. I intervened asking for the children to identify their arguments by showing me exactly which are their crafts on the board. I took one child at a time in my lap and a discussion took place. The discussion and the events show that children could recognise their ownership of the car craft due to different colours but they could not find their own ownership in the rest of the displayed crafts. This part of the chapter will argue that children's failure to

recognise their ownership in particular kind of crafts is not due to their age, as the practitioner argues, but as result of the fact that most of the time the practitioner prepares, directs and decides the topic, the material used and the way the child should work with the materials provided. It is argued (parent interviews) that the crafts produced are identical for every child and for this reason children are confused. In addition to this, the crafts are not accessible for children at any given time. Both issues often create strong disagreement between peers especially when they try to indentify their ownership. In the 6<sup>th</sup> February 'That is my car' MOVO6571 video fragment (Appendix, B.4.2§1 Dafni is trying to convince her friends that she had made a car. In her effort to convince her friends she steps on the table or chair trying to show them the exact craft.

Since 4<sup>th</sup> February it has been observed that in children's discussions they often try to indentify who is the owner of each craft. Here (Event 6<sup>th</sup> February '*That is my car*' MOVO6571 video data), there is an argument between the children about who is the owner of a specific car. The creator, the maker and the owner is confused. The emerging question is 'why?' Is it because the children cannot remember or is it related with the process of the crafting? If it is related to memory why then do children such as Christos recognise not only their own car but also the cars of the other children? Leaving for a while child's ability to recognise their craft, there is a more extensive concern of how children should access their products as they are the makers of these crafts. The children cannot physically reach the crafts and try to find a way to solve the problem by stepping on a chair and on the table. The display area of the crafts is challenging in this way. Whilst the practitioner is aware of the children's intentions she only intervenes if she notices an action that goes against the existing rules – 'no stepping on the furniture'. For instance, the practitioner told the child to get off the chair and the table but she ignored their discussion. Here the practitioner appears to ignore the reason for the child's attitude and she focus on the result, on 'what' the child is doing. However, it is clear that children finally ignore her notice and instead of stepping on the table, Dafni steps on the chair with Anastasia encouraging her. Practitioner Vera, during the interview viewing the video again, mentions that children cannot recognise their craft due to their age.

*'There are too young to remember! Of course they can not recognise their previous work. I am doing these kinds of activities to develop their motor skill'*

(Practitioner Vera, interview)

Additionally, practitioner argues that the aim of the craft activity is to indentify a child's knowledge on the subject and to inform parents about their work (see Appendix B.4.2,§2).Watching the above video she admits that the display board is too high and the children cannot see and touch their work, but she states that for safety reasons she cannot place it lower down.

*'I never though about the board....yeah I feel pity for Dafni.....she is trying poor girl to touch it...but I will never place it down because of the pins!'*

(Practitioner Vera, interview)

When the practitioner left and I asked the children whether they would like to show me which one is their crafts, all of them were so keen on that that they started pushing to be the first. I asked them to be patient and said everybody will have the chance to participate. The first thing that each child asked me was to raise them up to touch their own craft. All children recognised their own car because they focus on the colour (except Dafni who had not made any). However there was confusion when children were asked to indentify ownership of the other displayed crafts. For instance, in the fragment 6<sup>th</sup> February audio data, 'which car is yours?' DM200038 (see Appendix B. 4.2§3) Christos show me which craft is his own. Christos' answer about the car comes immediately without the need for me to read his written name. However, there is a misunderstanding, Christos insists that the green aeroplane is his own and not the blue. His name is written on the blue, Christos claims that 'Mine is the green! It is not the blue!' that is confirmed both in 4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> of February discussion (the discussion has been repeating twice). Christos's mother asserts that if Christos insists on that, it is for sure that the child is telling the truth. She mentions that he recognises his things. Additionally, Christos' awareness of the ownership is also demonstrated through the transcription of the video (6FG 'That is my car' MOVO6571). He knows not only his own car but also the car of some of his friends. Panayiotis' case is similar as Dafni's. Although he has not made any aeroplanes he insists that he did. However, he recognised the car straight away. However, Panayiotis seems to be a bit anxious about whether or not his answer is the correct one. Panayiotis along with Christos is sure about the car but struggles to find which aeroplane and boat is his. His attitude towards the aeroplane is similar to Dafni's regarding the car. He insists that he has made one although his name is not written in any of them. Additionally, his attitude changes once the practitioner comes into the classroom. Then the process of exploring continues in whispered discussion and I perceived that as a fear of making his opinion acknowledgeable to the practitioner.

None of the children recognise the boat crafts, while there is a misunderstanding of the aeroplane ownership for Christos and Panayiotis. Panayiotis cannot recognise the aeroplane but I could not find his name either. The practitioner insisted that Panayiotis has done such a craft. Maria is the child who appears to be worried the most about ownership. She wants the other people to know which crafts are for her. In the 4<sup>th</sup> February event while I was transferring the video data to the laptop, she came over and asked me to have a look for her work. Maria is not sure about which one is her aeroplane (the same process as above). She asked me to help her to find which aeroplane is hers. We celebrate together the achievement to find it out. Maria looking at the boat, she is wondering “mhmhhh... which one is my aeroplane? Is it...hmhmh... this one?” and in a polite way is asking me “it can be this one?” However, it is really interesting to hear Maria’s mother’s point of view when she views the pictures of the car crafts displayed (see Appendix, B.4.2§4). According to Maria’s mother, the applied programme is not according to the child’s expectations and demands. In the following fragments (see Appendix, B.4.2§5) Maria’s mother describes what her child is doing at home right after coming back from the setting. What she cannot do in the day care centre she is asking to do it at home. Additionally, Maria’s mother describes a set of activities at home that Maria experiences in a completely different way in the day care centre (see Appendix, B.4.2§6).

The above description shows that Maria experiences a different approach towards making handicrafts at home (this is also reported by Panayiotis’ and Christos’ parents). The children’s point of view during the video that they were preparing the crafts is not clear as the children are following practitioner’s directions. However, from the parent’s description at home it seems that children do at home what they cannot do at the centre. As Maria reports on 4<sup>th</sup> February ‘*Show me my hat*’, she knows how to make a hat but she is afraid that practitioner Vera will tell her off (see Appendix, B.4.2§7). Maria knows which hat is hers, even if it is not made by her because it is different. Additionally she knows the particular characteristics of her hat, it is with balls and flower. It is not similar to the other hats. Maria said that she knows how to make hats, but she is not doing her own for fear not being punished by the practitioner. Maria wanted me to believe that she knows which one is her hat due to prior event that happens the same day. The practitioner said to Anastasios that she would prepare his hat. Maria, Aspasia and Anastasios are sitting close to practitioner watching how she was making the hat. Maria and Aspasia look at the display hats on the top of the cupboard start having a disagreement about Maria’s hat ( see Appendix, B.4.2§8).



It should be mentioned here that Maria was not asked to comment on the video. Maria came by herself asking me to comment on the event. She knew that I was video filming them, but I did not ask at that very moment for their comments thinking that the event was not important. It was Maria that showed me when I was transferring the data onto my laptop that came to clarify the argument. In the video Maria is trying to prove which one is her hat, based on what the practitioner told her. She uses her verbal expression and she proposes in a very logical way that: 'if the hat that the practitioner is preparing for Anastasios is Dafni's then the hat over there it is not Maria's but Eleni's'. At the end Aspasia agrees with her. Previously the practitioner, in front of the three children, as has been mentioned, prepares Anastasio's hat. Anastasios, Maria and Aspasia observe the practitioner and how she prepares the hat and nobody can have doubts about the ownership of Anastasios' hat. Maria uses that fact to prove that she is telling the truth. The practitioner ignores the children completely although she is sitting next to them. As the practitioner argues in the interview 'Children are just egocentric and selfish. They do not know how to share!'. The hats are being prepared by the adult and they are placed really high so that children cannot even prove which hat is theirs. Maria is anxious about her hat, as the above two events show. The children are not involved in the process of preparing handicrafts. What the child is taking at home as a means of celebration an event is made completely by an adult and stored it in a place that the child cannot access before taking it at home. When Maria comes to ask me to show if she knows her hat, she needs to know that other people believe her she is right. It appears as if this is a process of reification for Maria (Wenger, 1998).

Additionally, the video data of the organised activities shows that practitioner has the complete control of the crafting process. All the videos, observation and interviews show that practitioner decides the topic of the craft, which always is related with the topic of the circle time. She decides the equipment and the resources provided which are strictly under the control of the adult. For example, the adult decides about the colour of the crayon, for how long the child will keep the glitter and where exactly to use it. The practitioner gives strict directions on the way children should stick or paint before giving them the material. If a child follows another strategy the adult will make a comment correcting the mistake if it is possible, otherwise they will show their disappointment to the child 'Why did you do it in this way?', 'I told you not to stick it there! Now we have to do it again!' (Video data and field notes).

In the relevant video (3FG MOVO6556) about the car craft Maria has stuck the windows on in a different place than the practitioner indicated to her and the practitioner asked her to correct it. Maria did not say anything and she just followed the practitioner's instructions. She is silent, she refuses to make any comment and as such her perception is not clear. Children are not allowed to use scissors and glue, although parents' report that at home their children are free to use these tools and they are competent to handle them. In the case of Christos, his mother was continuously encouraging the practitioner to let her child use scissors otherwise he would never stay in the class (Christos used to leave the class). Right after the children finish their work the practitioner asks them to give her their work for display on the board. Hence no time is given to children to touch or improve their work. After a sort period of display on the board the crafts are stored in folios accessible only to the practitioners.

The crafting process videos are not discussed here in detail due to the fact that the children's perspectives are not clear. The children seem to agree with the process only if you see it as a raw description - the children follow practitioner instruction and occasionally ask for more instructions or to repeat the instruction before starting to be sure that they are doing it correctly (Emilson and Folkesson, 2006). However, the question is whether they follow practitioner's instructions because they are eager to do it or for fear of going against practitioner's expectations. The above arguments arise from the plethora of children's events identifying the chance to be told off by a practitioner, as the above example of Maria shows.

#### 4.2.2 Crafts and being on a 'waiting list!'

*'There is no time to finish it Panayiotaki !!!!!' (Maria)*

This section will identify and discuss children's tendency to 'mock the system' (Corsaro, 2005a; 2003) in relation to the handicrafts process during peer interaction. It has been also found that for children there is one factor that particularly irritates them during the time they are in the day care centre: being excluded from the mature activities taking place during the crafting and decorating process. There is a repetition of events that demonstrates child's irritation towards practitioners during their peer's interaction (children do not demonstrate these kind of tactics in front of a practitioner but in peer interaction). For instance, on 12<sup>th</sup> February Maria is sitting at the table and observes how a practitioner prepares some crafts to decorate the classroom (see Appendix B.4.2§ 9).

In the above example Maria and the two boys start arguing with no any obvious build up of tension. In their discussion the dominant phrase is ‘the same!’ Maria’s tone is full of eagerness. Referring the above event to sociocultural theory (Rogoff, 2003), it is clear that Maria after a long period of ‘intent participation’ in the above video is ready to be involved in the ‘mature’ activity. She attempts to take the scissors but these are immediately removed from her hands by the practitioner. It is not obvious what Maria is thinking at that moment, she follows the practitioner but when more children came to observe the activity she shows her eagerness ‘by punishing’ Anastasios ‘the same!’. It is not clear whether or not ‘the same’ is referring to the scissors or to the fact that they are going to have the same craft. She tells him ‘the same’ as if there are no exceptions for anyone and the second punishment is ‘you are not going to make it!’ Initially Anastasios seems not to understand what is happening but afterwards is involved in the disagreement, created all together what Corsaro (2003, 2005a) describes as a ‘make do’s’ children act as if they fight because they are not agree with the routine.

The above event shows that children are excluded from the ‘mature’ activities due to adult’s notion of safety towards the child. The practitioner is aware of children’s interest to be involved in the process but does not let them participate for fear of the parent’s reaction. However, there is a paradox here. Comparing what the practitioner reports with what parents state, it seems that the practitioner has generalised her previous empirical way of working in these group (practitioner interview) while children’s experiences differ from what they are doing at home (parents interview).

It has also be found that before starting to do crafts as part of the organised activity, children begin arguing until the time practitioner hands out all the equipment (for instance the video1DG ‘*Fights before starting*’ MOVO5861 -see Appendix B.4.2 §10). In the video Maria, Panayiotis and Dafni do not appear aware of what the two girls were talking about. However, they start to participate in the fight although they did not appear to have any reason to do so. Once the practitioner gave them the plasticine they immediately stopped fighting. Most probably the children do not like to wait for so long (Maria reports this) but their perception is missed due to the children’s refusal to make any comment on those video data. If the argument of Wiltz and Klein (2001) that children avoid talking about issues related to adult’s ‘mean’ attitude is true then here the reason why children avoid making comments could be related with that. It also seems that waiting for a long time makes them get upset. However, when the practitioner watched the video she said that due to their ‘egocentrism’ they created these fights:

*‘They are not fighting!! Everybody has got.....everybody wanted to be heard!! They are selfish! They are scared that I am going to treat them in a not fair way because they are egocentric!’*

(Practitioner Anastasia, interview)

However, further video data during the handicraft time shows that every time children are waiting for practitioner to hand out the equipment for an activity they are arguing (see Appendix B.4.2§11). Additionally, it has been found that children intend to see what is on the top on the drawers and touch what is in a high location. For example, in one case Maria (4thMG Audio DM200117 data) said: ‘I want to see something!’ , and asks me to lift her up to check something. During the time she was observing practitioner prepare crafts Maria noticed that the practitioner used glitter. Most probably she noticed exactly where the practitioner placed it as when I held her up she focused straight away on the glitter. Maria wanted to use the glitter but the practitioner did not let her to use it in the same way as she does at home. This is not the first example of children’s desire to accessing crafts that are at a high level and the research data reveals a considerable number of events that demonstrate children’s tendency to reach things that are not accessible to them, quiet often I have been used by children to complete their mission (see Table 4.4 and 4.5 for the frequency of the event, Appendix B).

Further, looking at the events from the children’s point of view it seems that the ‘nagging and demanding’ process before and during the handicrafts is related with the fact that children are totally controlled by an adult in these activities. In addition to this it has been found that children experience episodes where they cannot spend enough time working on their creation. There are three significant events that highlight child’s perspectives. The first event which takes place at the 15<sup>th</sup> December will depict how practitioners applied the programme during the organised activity while the other two on the 11<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> February will show how children perceive the process of crafting, focusing mostly on the time consuming process. Due to the length of film recorded the first video will only be reported here in detail focussing on Panayiotis’ reaction to the fact that, although he was patiently waiting for his turn, in the end he did not spend the time on the activity he wanted due to the rules that the practitioner articulated. The first part of the video, similar to the video of 3<sup>rd</sup> December, shows how children are fighting again waiting for the practitioner to hand out the equipment. From the practitioner’s point of view, the meaning of participation is as

follow: the child is following the directions of practitioner sitting on the chair and waiting by the time practitioner will be ready (practitioner Anastasia, discussion after the event).

If the child tries to touch any of the equipment they are prevented straight away and are also in the danger of being punished (see the articulation of the rules below). The glitter that Christos was trying to touch is the centre of attention for the children. It has appeared for first time and the children wanted to use it. Being attracted to the new material they are waiting and complying with the practitioner's instructions. However, there is a problem; the use of glitter is very limited and children have to wait for their turn. In the second part of the same video Maria and Panayiotis are waiting patiently. They lift up a plate, after listening to the practitioner's request. The data cannot show what they are thinking. Christos demands his turn. The practitioner gets cross with him. In the third part of the video the dominant role that practitioner plays is revealed. There are strict rules: during the activity children should follow her instructions exactly, no complaints are permitted. Children should sit properly on the chair, otherwise their work is not done properly, they have to be patient, they should not be in a hurry, they have to use their hands in the way the practitioner shows, while time for experiments is not allowed.

Video data reveals that on average it takes 10 minutes for the practitioner to establish these rules. The children's points of view during this time are not clear. The practitioner's role is so dominant that it does not offer any chance for the children to act and react. According to the practitioner's point of view, children have to learn to wait for their turn, introducing them to the meaning of socialisation and respect for each other (interview Practitioner Anastasia). Additionally she mentions to children that they should not be in a hurry as everybody will have a chance to use the resources provided. Paradoxically, the practitioner has also already mentioned that she is in a hurry and she wants children to work without creating any problem. The really problematic part of the event, happens at the end of the video where Panayiotis (although all this time has been waiting patiently) complains to the practitioner who grasps the glitter from his hands, while Christos supports him trying to convince him to give up:

**'We do not have time .... I am sorry'**

*Panayiotis: I have not finished yet!!!!*

*Practitioner: I know my dear you will keep going after!!ok? This is what I am telling you!.. I am not telling you don't do it at all!!!*

*Panayiotis avoids looking at the practitioner (10:48). Christos comes close to him and he touches him on his shoulder (10:57)*

*Christos: Lets go now!*

*Panayiotis: Look I have not finished yet!*

*Christos: Lets go, lets go!*

*Practitioner: we have to get down .....Because all the classes are going to be there, if I had more time I would leave you (to finish)*

*Panayiotis gets up, he follows Christos and he looks at me with a sad expression. He goes to the bathroom and he keeps saying..... but I have not finished yet....I am telling you!*

*(15<sup>th</sup> December 'we do not have time .... I am sorry!' MOVO603, video data )*

All the way from bathroom to the foyer Panayiotis was complaining shaking his hands 'I have not finished yet, I am telling you!' During their organised crafting activity children often experienced timing consuming issues related with waiting for the practitioner to be ready, waiting for the practitioner to hand out the equipment, waiting for the practitioner to listen to their request, waiting for the practitioner to give them instructions. Children reported in many examples that the day care centres' programme does not give them enough time to deal with their work. On 11<sup>th</sup> February, during their free drawing time, Maria and Panayiotis started speaking doing blotches on their drawing to encourage each other to rush as there was not enough time. 'There is no time to finish it Panayiotaki !!!!!' Maria was repeatedly saying to Panayiotis with a voice full of stress. Afterwards, Panayiotis was taking pictures of the pencils 'for we don t have enough time' as he told me. Similar events have been explored in the field notes and other video data while the event has been discussed with parents and practitioner Vera. In the Mosaic Table (see Table 4.4 Appendix B) the relevant video should be seen as full whole reflection of the time consuming issue and how children experience it. Both the parents and the practitioner agree that they push the children due to the fact that they are presuied for time.

Panayiotis is more sensitive to the issues of the time due to the fact he experiences the same situation at home (mother's interview). When the event was reported to his mum she said that due to the fact Panayiotis is a child of an extended family (four children in total) their life is always in a rush. He is the youngest in the family and he needs to follow the programme of the elder siblings due to their tasks (in Greece after school the majority of children go to private language schools, dancing and music schools, see Chapter 2). When she saw the pictures of Panayiotis she felt responsible for this time consuming part.

However, the practitioner admitted that she is pushing and directing the children in many of the activities (practitioner Vera interview).

The event that happened on the 11<sup>th</sup> February and *'There is no time to finish it Panayiotaki !!!!!'* is in Panayiotis' mind even in the 16FG in the video MOVO6694. During their free drawing Panayiotis again encourages again his friends to play the *'I don't have time!'* game. Panayiotis remembers clearly the event of 11<sup>th</sup> February. However, this time practitioner is listening to the discussion and she interrogates him. Panayiotis does not give up but he tries more carefully (whispering) to convince his friends. The rest of the group refuse to participate, it is not clear why. Further, the event takes another direction during the time the children are involved in the 'free play'. The children start running around the carpet mocking and saying:

**'Bebebebebebe'**

*'We have got because we are little kids!'. The children speed up running around more and more waving their orange drawings 'Bebebebebebebebebebe' Anastasios starts saying and they are giggling (14:56min) they all start speeding around together saying 'bebebebebebebebebe' giggling and waved their drawings*

*(16<sup>th</sup> February 'bebebebebebebebebe' MOVO6694, video data).*

The above video data is a reflection of the children's points of view about the crafting process. Both events took place during the time children are not under the adult's supervision. Children are mocking the system, as Corsaro has discussed many times on his work, and this time the interpretation is not based on an adult's point of view but children themselves admit 'we are mocking! Bebebebebebebe!'. Panayiotis also took pictures of the event, and the children gave more details about the event when they saw the video:

***Children's comments***

*I show Panayiotis and Anastasios the video. Anastasios recognises the video and he said straightaway:*

*Anastasios: Soon the 'bebebebebebebebe' will start*

*Angeliki: why did you do that sound....bebebebebebebe.....that is what exactly I want to show you*

*Anastasios: cos we had got crayons and the teachers didn't it!*

*Panayiotis start doing again the same sound 'bebebebebebe'*

*Angeliki: And you had paper that practitioner did not have?*

*Anastasios: yes!*

*Panayiotis: Bebebebebebebebebebebebe*

*Anastasios: lalallallallalallalallalallalallaa*

*The two children start walking around again saying ‘bebebebebebebebe’ as if they mock something. Then Anastasios and Panayiotis are coming and telling me ‘takes this papers now, keep them to have it!’*

(16FG audioDM200098)

Starting from the fact that the children gave me the two papers I felt that I was not in the same category as the two other practitioners. I had the right to have these two papers, while the practitioners did not have. Children in this way showed that they wanted me to report that. There are two things that the children are mocking here (Corsaro, 2003, 2005a, 2009). Firstly, considering that it is during the handicraft time, most probably the children are mocking the whole process of the crafting and the way it is taking place. Secondly, children have their own handicrafts that the practitioner did not have while all this time the practitioner is using a pencil, scissors and glues without give anything to the children, not even telling them what she is doing (when the children are asking them).

The whole video is rich in meaning and a full analysis has been omitted due to its great length. Here, only the function in the context the children provided me with (the drawings) is reported. However, the above video data shows that children are much more talkative during child initiated activity. The child’s point of view is not so clear during the activity when it is adult directed due to the fact that is the children are trying to work according to adults’ expectations. As Corsaro (2009: 306) notes, in mocking situations ‘they do what they are told but in a way that clearly puts them in control of the situation’. Hence the child’s point of view is more dynamic and full of meanings when it is the child’s initiative and without adult-practitioners surveillance.

## **Analysis**

Corsaro (2005a: 114) states that children in their transition from home to early years education and care experience ownership and possession under a different context than in the setting. He points out that the children once they arrive in the setting are expected to learn how to live in a collective way where ownership and sharing are dependent on the temporality of the possession of the material or space. For this reason he states that children, in their effort to negotiate possession are progressing a more advanced notion of



ownership extending their spaces, friendships and objects intending to protect them (see Chapter 2). Corsaro (2005a: 139) calls this 'protection of interactive space'.

Additionally Corsaro (2003) refers to episodes that reveal children's effort to protect their interactive space and how it is sometimes difficult not only for adults but even for peers to gain entrance into their own activity or space. Corsaro (2003: 36) describes a paradigm where two children despite the fact that in the beginning of their play seem to be occupied in solidarity, (it would be accord with those who are in favour of parallel play) suddenly one of the children asked the other 'we're friends right?' and the other answer 'right' and then they continued playing together. With the above paradigm Corsaro (2003: 37) confirms that 'social participation and sharing are the heart of kid's peer culture'. On the other hand Corsaro found in his study episodes where children refused to permit other peers to participate in their play. According to Corsaro (2003: 40), children's intention is to protect their own interactive space and it happens not due to the fact that they are selfish but as a consequence of 'the fragility of peer interaction' and more specifically 'they want to keep sharing what they are already sharing'. He found that every time that somebody tries to enter into their activity, children will refuse to offer permission. In the theory of interpretive reproduction (see Chapter 2) supported by Corsaro, it emerges that children participate in society in a novel and creative way, affecting and being affected by the whole process.

However, in his definition Corsaro means children's tension to protect basically the ongoing play from other's interruptions. It seems therefore that in the example of Maria and Dafni, this protection is extended to the ownership of the handicraft's as result of the fact children are not fully participant of the activity due to exclusion from the 'mature' activity (Rogoff, 2003; see Chapter 2). Children are keen observers of what the practitioner is doing (Rogoff, 2003) but they cannot contribute to the preparation of an activity, such as the hats. In addition to this, the handicrafts are stored at a height to prevent children from causing any damage to them. Therefore, looking into the case of Maria and Dafni, it seems that both girls are trying to identify their ownership hence to show that they belong to the same group (see Chapter 2, Section 2.4) as they have got the same handicrafts. However, due to the fact that those handicrafts are not made by children themselves in connection with the fact of the position in the height lever so as not being accessible by children, seems that children often have disagreements creating what Corsaro (2005; 2005b) names as 'discussion'.

Corsaro notes that in Italian society (similar as in a Greek-Mediterranean society) part of peoples' daily life is the notion of 'discussione' (in Greek the equal meaning is 'συζήτηση') which takes place in every public space, in case of Greece mostly during the time people are sharing the moment of 'café time' (a time that lasts at least for a half an hour, some times can last even more than one hour). It is about public debates or discussions that children learn since their early years. Those discussions and debates are following by gestures, facial expressions and loudly voice on people's effort to identify their point of view. As Corsaro (2005: 164) points out, 'discussione' is playing significant role in children's peer cultures as identify children's participation in a sharing culture for things that are particular important for them (in the present case the handicrafts and their ownership) while at the same time the entry requirements are not demanded. From the paradigm with Dafni is easily to understand how the whole group has been involved on the 'discussione' - due to the fact that usually involves agreements or disagreements processing in a very naturalistic way. Corsaro (2005) has noticed that those kinds of discussions normally take place, during the directed adults' activities. For instance on the example with Dafni and the car, children are waiting for the practitioner to hand out the task, or in the case of Maria and Aspasia the two girls are attending practitioner being in a task. In this way Corsaro states that 'the initiation and constitution of a discussion of their choosing gives the children a sense of power and control over the environment and caregivers' (Corsaro, 2005: 164) because an adult's world is particularly valued, at the same time they feel empowered as they manage to find a solution to their problem without any adults involvement.

Nevertheless, considering the topic of all these discussions, it is clear that common ground is the ownership of the handicrafts. Dafni insists about her ownership of the car (although she was not there that day) due to the fact doing handicrafts accompanies with the notion of not being punished by the adult. As it has been observed (and it is confirmed also by practitioner herself) the practitioner often has been heard to warn children that they are going to be excluded from the activity of handicrafts or they are not going to be allowed to take any handicrafts home if they do not comply with the programme (most of the events took place during the circle time). Thus when both of the girls defined their ownership towards the handicraft in their peer interaction they feel empowered and part of the community. Similar notions must have been in play even in the case of Panayiotis. Panayiotis insists about the aeroplane in the same way Dafni insists about the car. He is getting anxious through the discussion most probably because he is not sure which one is his own. Corsaro (2005b) has placed the notion of 'discussione' in the projective element

of agency and the conflict and negotiation in the practical-evaluation dimension of the agency following Eminbayer and Mische's model of agency. For instance, the Figure 4.1.1 in the previous section shows how the priming event determines children's way of playing the wolf game. Here in the handicraft events the children are discussing an issue about ownership due to the way they have experienced it before - not having handicraft means you are excluded from the activity because you have been punished. Again the practitioner misunderstands children's intentions, seemingly influenced by the age segregation theory (see Chapter 2) – 'she is not able to recognise yet she is too young'. However, the handicraft activity in this way is perceived in another meaning. For the practitioner it means 'work' (video data, observation, interviews, field notes) for the children it means proof that they have not been punished.

Hence, the interpretation of the handicrafts from child's point of view challenges the work of Emilson and Folkenson (2006) in relation to the matter of seeing the participation as classified as 'strong or weak', as it is not clear that if, for both participants, the purpose of the activity is understood as the same. The video analysis is based on the researcher's point of view and not on the child's and does not show if the participants share the same meaning. In my work focusing on what the child indicates as important in the crafting activity, is not what has been found by Emilson and Folkenson (2006) but it is the meaning these activities have for the child and in their peer culture which is different from that of adults.

However, for the purpose of this study, the focus will now turn to what Rogoff (2003) names as 'intent participation' to identify children's perspectives in relation with the applied curriculum and more specifically to the way participation is presented in the Greek setting and how the children deal with that meaning. As has been reported, the observation, adult interviews and children's comments show that the planned programme is designed exclusively by the adults themselves. The topic, the material, the time and the way one activity such as the handicrafts takes place, is exclusively determined by the adult. Following Rogoff's categorisation, the Greek setting for the curriculum follows the model of 'the assembly-line-instruction' (Rogoff et al, 2003,185). It seems that for the Greek case although there is no industrialisation the country follows the flow of the other industrialised countries by applying in the educational system of the Factory model of children's education (see Chapter 2). The child is not perceived as a full participant in the programme but as a recipient of the knowledge that it is transmitted.

Consequently, it seems that, due to the fact they experience different involvement in the activities at home, the children in the Greek setting clearly start to mock and interrogate the programme in relation to the available time, the delivering of the equipment and the accessibility of the tools. They interrogate the practitioner's exclusiveness in the use of the tools such as scissors and they use the researcher many times as a means to gain an optical view of the displayed items (see Table, 4.5 see Appendix B.). The children are ready to participate in the process of doing handicrafts as a full participants but the notion of participation has a different meaning for the practitioner. Therefore there is a distance between the shared meanings and the children are challenging that through their peer play where they report to me their disapproval through their comments and also offer their drawings as evidence.

Following Rogoff's et al. (2003) model of intent participation with the assembly-line instruction, it is clear from the aforementioned events related with the crafts and the accessibility of the items that children experience the two models at home differently than the setting. The parents of Maria, Christos, Panayiotis and Dafni report that, due to their life style (all of them are working), the time they can spend with their children is during the preparation of the food, cleaning, tidying up and preparation of elder siblings for their homework. For this reason they state that they deliberately involve children in the mature activities asking them to add ingredients in the pot, to use fabrics for cleaning the dust or sit with the older children using pens and scissors to make their own creations. The parents' description is completely different from what has been observed in the setting and the practitioners themselves and the parents (in the case of Christos) report disagreements with the two components in relation to the availability of the material. In addition to this, it has been observed many times that children 'emulate work in their play' during their free play (Morelli et al 2003: 269) pretending to make soup or to go hunting. Morelli et al. (2003) found that the children's preferences to get involved in one activity were related with their different opportunities to observe mature activities. For instance Christos, Maria and Panayiotis are full participants in the mature activities at home and in their perception their disagreement has been found in relation to what the material the programme provides them (real or plastic, Christos comments, see further Bitou and Waller, 2011). Thus it seems that children in the above examples are mocking the practitioners because they have underestimated their skills in using tools and doing craft based activities.

In addition to this, following the description of the assembly line instruction (Rogoff et al., 2003) obviously the practitioner is paying attention to the production and the purpose of

the handicraft. From the practitioner's point of view these crafts are evidence to the parents that they are not just offering care (Chapter 2). For this reason the practitioner states that these crafts are a reflection of the subject that the child has been taught and a kind of evaluation of what the child has learned. So clearly the practitioner is working as a transmitter of knowledge to the child who according to her point of view s/he does not know. Parents on the other hand challenge the process. For instance Panayiotis' mother characterises these craft activities as 'non-sense' while she states that she never keeps them as a memorial treasure and Panayiotis destroys them most of the time. Also, Maria's mother mentions that the way these activities are applied to her child is not according to her interest and that is reflected in the way Maria acts after coming back from the setting. Here the way the practitioner works appears to be strongly criticised by both parents and children due to the knowledge of what children are capable of at home and the lack of accessibility to the real tools the child experience at the setting.

Further, a remaining question is why the children are worried about the ownership of the handicrafts? Rogoff et al. (2003) assume that in the assembly line instruction model of working with students it is the teacher who facilitates children's participation through the use of appraisals, threats and rewards. Indeed this study has reported many conformist ways of working with children in this particular day care centre (the wolf, the Santa Claus, the exclusion from the handicrafts activity etc). However, Rogoff et al. (2003) state that the competent practitioner (who needs to show to parents that she educates children) creates competitive feelings in the students that need to feel public recognition. Rogoff et al. (2003) state that in the intent participation model the participant does not need any kind of appraisal as s/he is aware of his/her contribution, when for instance preparing the family meals. Therefore the child's contribution is acknowledged, but this recognition is not easily understandable by the child who experiences the assembly line instruction model of learning. The last case assessment takes place through the accountability of the result or what is produced. Thus the children here insisted that they have their own handicraft, they try to empower their role in the group (Corsaro, 2005a), proving their contribution to the activity (Rogoff et al., 2003).

## **Part II: The Case of England**

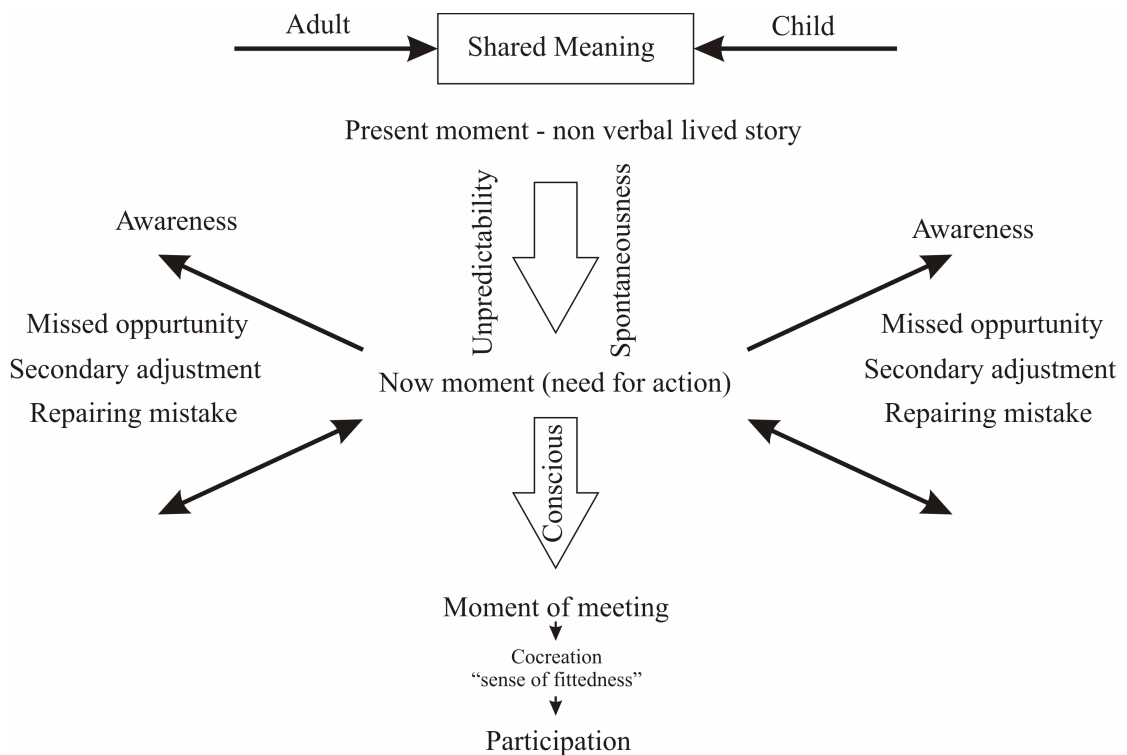
### **Section 4.3 Children's contribution and participation to the planning**

#### **Introduction**

In this section children's contribution to the planning of the activities in the setting in England will be examined. Emphasis is given to 'the present moment' (Stern, 2004). The present moment has a past, present and future and determines participants' decisions, as such it shows agency (Emirbayer and Mische, 1998) playing a significant role in children's participation because it involves feelings, that may or not be captured by the other (adult or peer). This has not been considered in the methodology chapter because I wanted to describe the process more detail within the description and interpretation of the events. This is especially relevant for the case of England where the children's comments are missed in many events.

The 'present moment' is an extension of Corsaro and Heise's (1990) analysis of the Ethno software but it differs. Firstly, it does not use any software for the transcription, wanting to live the story and the feelings that each video and field note event creates during the transcription. Secondly, the transcription is highlighted with a parenthesis of the 'present moment', which indicates that the participants are thinking something; it is not clear what, but that thoughts change their decision in the flow of the moment. There are two present moments; one that shows the feelings (silence, gesture, facial expression) and one which shows the decision a participant is taking (withdrawal or involvement) at the end of the event. The present moment combined with Rogoff's, Corsaro's and Jordan's models, is described graphically in the Figure 4.3 (over).

The present moment, according to Stern (2004), is the non verbal lived story, it is short in duration, it is full of feelings, it is confirmed by awareness, it is unpredictable, it is dynamic (decisions are taken) and for this reason it is followed by silence indicating that the subject has lived the nonverbal story. In the shared meaning, which Stern names plot-story, there are some similar elements the who, what, why, when, where and how the event takes place. I will use the term shared meaning to indicate how both adults and children become aware of a situation and how each one gives emphasis to a different part of the event.



**Figure 4.3 Unfolding the temporal architecture of shared meaning in the present moment**

Initially, this section highlights two events based on the theory of ‘intent participation’ (Rogoff, 2003, Rogoff et al., 2003) and the notion of Lenz Taguchi (2010) about ‘intra-active pedagogy’ on how the object can be the factor that determines the child’s involvement in the activity. It also examines how children are prevented from contributing to the planning when they are about to prepare an activity. The section is divided into two parts, firstly highlighting children’s opportunities for preparing the pedagogical corners, together with the practitioner changing and contributing to the planning of the day. The second part examines how the children participate in the planning or changes to the planning.

A general overview of a child's planning compared to an adult's planning is better constituted in children's transformation of items from one area to another. However, these events will be reported as simple description, as the child's comments are not available (see Table 4.6 see Appendix B). Therefore the aim of this section is to show 'how the meaning of participation is perceived in the day care centre' and to what extent children are working according to adult's expectations. It is based mostly on how children's participation is perceived during a common routine, the circle time or 'free play'. The major finding is that no matter whether the curriculum is child directed or not, the adults ignore the children's requests and exercise power over the children's interests and intentions to shape and change the planning.

The episode entitled '*the clap your little hands event*' will be examined and compared with the cases of two children - Jennifer and Ian. The findings provide evidence how when young children and adults share the same meaning (Jordan, 2004) the children are eager learners (Rogoff, 2003) and the curriculum design is according to the children's interest, thus creating a peaceful environment, emerging from the contribution of all participants. However, the data also shows that children's contribution can become problematic when sometimes it is the adult who disrespect that peaceful environment (18<sup>th</sup> March video data '*circle time and clap your little hands*'- MOVO2524). This section also concludes that children's participation in the same activity can be experienced in different ways; it can be as an active actor (Jennifer) or as a good observer (Ian, Allan).

#### *4.3.1 Children's opportunities for preparing the pedagogical corners and changing and contributing to the planning of the activities*

This section will describe two events based on the Field Notes, Video data, practitioner's comments and 'The Planning for Children's Interests' that practitioners keep (notes for reporting their observation as a reflection of their planning). This document is kept by a practitioner every day and it is part of the way this particular setting is working towards 'a child's best interest' – although the child's comments are missing. Hence the interpretation of the data from an adult's point of view is challenged and for this reason the 'present moment' is reported in parenthesis to spot the time the child is silent and seems that she is thinking. Parents' comments are missing as well. From the analysis of the practitioner's perception it will become clear that the interpretation differs between practitioners showing that there is confusion in the way the staff understand the same event. The following Table 4.7 shows the mosaic of the event in this section:



Table 4.7 The Mosaic of the Events: Children's opportunities for preparing the pedagogical corners

28F Field notes "The empty water tray"	28 F MOVO2157 "The spaghetti" video data	28FE field notes (background) Jennifer's reaction prevents some children of participating	24A MOVO3011 "The play dough" video data  24A Field notes "Bringing the white Van"
<p>Practitioners' comments: "Missed opportunity"(Martha)</p> <p>"I was reflecting" (Caroline)</p> <p>Planning for children's best interest "Feeling different textures"</p> <p>Practitioner's comments: "Feeling different texture" (Betty)</p>			

In the first Field Notes event recorded on the 28<sup>th</sup> February the practitioner had not organised the usual water tray on time. Part of the planning was to replace the water with cooked pasta. However, preparing the pasta took more time than usual. The children arrived but the tray was empty. Jennifer and other children that are keen on messy activities went over to the tray once they arrived in the room.

#### **'The empty water tray'**

*Jennifer goes towards to the water tray. She realises that there was no water there. She looks around then she goes and sits at the main table. She takes the scissors and she starts cutting paper.*

(28<sup>th</sup> February, 'The empty water tray' Field notes)

To Jennifer's surprise the water tray was not organised as usual. She watched a practitioner pour the pasta into the tray she went over to look more closely (Appendix, B.4.3§1). The video in the Appendix (28<sup>th</sup> February 'The spaghetti' MOVO2157) shows that the children are used to playing in the water tray and are surprised to find the tray empty. Jennifer waited to see how the area was going to be organised. Looking at the video still photos in the Appendix 4.3§1, it captures 'the present moments' (Stern, 2004) those moments that Jennifer seems to live a story and think with emerging feelings. These feelings are correlated with Jennifer's effort to explore the material, however her lived story is missing as child's comments are missing. Practitioner Caroline said she was feeling satisfied with the whole process and mentioned that she was reflecting on Jennifer's learning (see practitioner's Caroline interview in Appendix B.4.3§2). However, practitioner Martha

viewing the same video noticed straight away that the interaction with the child was missing and the child could be encouraged to be much more involved in the whole process:

*‘Oh, Ok. Missed opportunity because Jennifer said something to her and she just didn’t respond to her’*

(Practitioner Martha interview, see further Appendix B.4.3§3)

Here in the practitioners’ comments there is differentiation. Jennifer looks to enjoy the part with the glitter as she started laughing and observes all the process until the time the adult finishes adding material. In terms of participation the practitioner appears to miss opportunities to tune into Jennifer’s interest (practitioner Martha). Even though Jennifer repeatedly asks ‘what are you doing?’ the practitioner does not respond. It seems as if the child is perceived as an observer but not a participant in the planning of resources. When children come in the morning they find the pedagogical corners already organised. The child is perceived in this way as active in doing things after being designed by adults. Thus the child’s role is perceived in this way as an actor only when the adult permits it.

Looking now at the planning, the aim of the programme was *‘To let the children to feel different textures’ (The Planning of Children’s Interests)*. It seems that Jennifer works here according to the adult’s expectation, as she is using her senses smelling and touching. That makes practitioner Caroline feel satisfied with Jennifer’s involvement and she also agrees that Jennifer enjoys the activity. Jennifer has shown that the mixture smelt bad with her facial expression. This is a factor that prevents her from not being more involved in the activity. What is also interesting is the background. Two more children Diana and Jane were waiting to being involved, but seeing Jennifer’s reaction they moved away. The bad smell of the cooked pasta (material as an agent) prevents the children from being involved. Similar to Jennifer, Diana leaves the activity giving a clear message to the other girls that were observing the children’s reaction to the pasta during the whole event. The way the corner was organised creates unexpected reactions. The use of material taken from the everyday life such as the cooked pasta creates a physical phenomenon that nobody could have predicted, sparking off a sense that practitioner thought that will not be activated-smell.

*‘They didn’t like the smell. I never thought about that..... I organised the activity for them to feel the texture. Hahahaahaha....bless!! Diana’s face is so funny...hahahaha... and Jane ....hahahhahhaa’.*

(Interview with Practitioner Caroline)

The child enjoys the process of preparation by watching the practitioner and waiting to see the last result. The physical material causes changes in children's reaction (Lenz Taguchi, 2010) with the material and let more than one senses to be involved. A similar event happened also with the same child on the 24<sup>th</sup> April. Practitioner Betty had decided to organise a tray with cornflour, oats and water. She had decided to involve the children in the process with main aim to feeling the sticky mixture (Practitioner Betty). Jennifer and three more children are helping practitioner using spoons to mix the flour. Initially the practitioner encourages children to help her to prepare the mixture however when Jennifer takes the initiative to pour more water in the mixture she is prevented (see Appendix B.4.3§4).

In the above video data (24 April, *'The play dough'* MOVO3011) the children are following the practitioner's instructions to mix the flour, watching her add the basic ingredients cornflour, oats and water. The present moments are highlighted. The child watches the practitioner stir the mixture with her hands and does the same. Moving her hands out of the mixture she checks them and then she goes to the water tray and washes her hands in the water. Coming back the child is taking the initiative (Rogoff, 2003; Rogoff et al. 2003) to add some more water, transferring it from the water tray. She repeats this action twice. However the second time that she is trying to add some more water the practitioner prevents her from doing it, stating that first they need to stir the materials that are already in the tray. The child ignores her. Her mission seems to be different from the practitioners. Accidentally the water is spilt; the practitioner prevents the child from doing that but Jennifer ignores her by pouring all the water on the floor (secondary adjustment – ignored). She looks at the practitioner without saying anything (present moment-feelings). Also the rest of the children are attending the event. Finally another practitioner comes to remove the jug from the child's hands. The child's comments are missing as she did not want to watch the video. Thus the children's role was illuminated only in feeling the texture (Planning for Children's Interests).

Whilst the child has the chance to choose an activity, when she takes the initiative during that activity, in case it goes against adults' expectations, she is prevented. Jennifer does not make any comment, but she ignored the practitioner's request to not add more water or not pour the water on the ground (not clear why- present moment). It seems that the child is wondering (the lived non-verbal story). In the whole process, which somehow is similar to the case of 28<sup>th</sup> February, it is clear that the child has been invited to participate by helping,

giving support and feeling the texture, but not extended as practitioner's actions and comments shows. The child has to follow the process as part of the adult's aim to feel the texture. The curriculum objectives are for children to feel how the mix from dry is becoming harder and stickier (practitioner reports). However the child is not being encouraged to add the ingredients into the tray. The child attends the process of doing the mixture and participates following practitioner's order. When the child takes the initiative trying to add more ingredients into the mixture modelling what the practitioner has done before, she is prevented. The child having passed from the 'intent participation' and having understood how to prepare the mixture is now ready to do what the adult has done before. However, the practitioner prevents her as long as the mixture is taking another character (material turn), thus trying to follow the aims of the planning to feel the texture. The child ignores adult orders showing agency (Corsaro, 2003) and pours water on the dough causing some unexpected changes to the used material (Lenz Taguchi, 2010). At the end the practitioner removes the jug from her hands. Whilst the child is about to try a different process, she is prevented. Jennifer did not give up her effort. Coming back from the changing room, she gets involved in the activity again putting her hands into the mix and feeling the sticky texture, she leaves and she comes back bringing something more on the tray.

*Jennifer has come keeping on her hands a white van, she is about to put it on the tray with the play dough but Betty is asking her not to put the car into the tray*  
(24<sup>th</sup> April 'Bringing the white Van', Field notes)

In the next video that was focus on Ian, finally Jennifer came to take part in the activity, following the practitioner's direction for feeling the texture. The 'Planning for the Children's Interests' document reports only the part where Jennifer is feeling the texture with her hands and the sticky material '*Jennifer put her hands into the mixture of cornflour and said her hands were stuck*'. Looking into the documents what is reported is what is according to adult's expectations. The child's effort to change or help in another way has been omitted. The child's intention has been prevented, what the child is thinking in these two case is not clear (non-verbal lived story); conversely it will not become clear whether the child's aims and goals were different or similar to the adults.

#### 4.3.2 Participating in the planning or trying to change the planning? Children's activities in the 'here and now' situation

In the event of 14<sup>th</sup> April, Jennifer, Ian and occasionally Arthur (this part of the video is omitted here) were the protagonists. The prior events show that the twister appears in the children's space on the 10<sup>th</sup> April when one child, Aida, was crying. Her mother was with her in the playgroup and the girl was going around exploring the area. Jennifer found the twister, the activity is child directed and Jennifer invited me to watch her. The next table 4.8 of the Mosaic of the events shows how the events have happened chronologically.

**Table 4.8 Mosaic of the Events 'The twister and the circle time'**

10AE field notes "the twister"	10AMOVO2820 "Jumping on the twister" (the child invites the researcher) video data	14April "the twister in the circle time" MOVO2884 video data	Practitioner's comments "she does not like circle time" (Caroline)	Parent's comments: "I cant see her sitting in circle time. She definitely does not like it"
Routine cards: Jennifer choose the "free play" and "outside area" cards	15AE "on the green! Playing twister with children" (child invites researcher) Field Notes	17June MOVO4595 "which colour?" video data	17June "the twister and the colour"	

The following video shows how the four children were playing with the twister.

#### ***'Jumping on the twister'***

*Jennifer, Cindy, Allan and James step on the top of each face. They jump. They look down to check out exactly where they are stepping on. Jennifer steps with her both legs on two blue smiling faces. Allan steps with his both feet on the same, the red face while Cindy moves from one part to another. (00:26) Jennifer leaves and goes to put on her shoes, 'That is enough!'(present moment) she tells me and she tries to put her shoes on. Cindy looks at her while Allan jumps and finally leaves as well. Cindy goes and jumps again. 'I can't put my shoes on!' Jennifer says. Cindy sits on her knees and says 'What is that?' Jennifer takes her shoes and she leaves without answering her. She looks upset. Cindy leaves as well.*

(10<sup>th</sup> April 'Jumping on the twister' MOVO2820 video data)

Jennifer did not make any comment on the above video. However, it was something that makes her withdraw from the activity and leave being upset. Looking at the video, it seems that Jennifer knew the rules of the game. She took off her shoes and socks, she placed both of her feet on different faces and she stood up and waited. Mentioning to me 'That is enough!' indicates how long the activity should be observed for. When practitioners were asked about the twister they mentioned that they have never played this game. It is not clear from where Jennifer is bringing the twister experience however it is clear that she knew before how to play it. The above story with the twister has not finished here. On the 14<sup>th</sup> April, Jennifer brought the twister to the circle time. It has been noticed that children bring with them some toys before going to the carpet area when they are listening in 'singing time' or 'circle time' (Appendix,B.4.3.§5).

Jennifer's and Ian's view of the curriculum is not fully clear as long as there are no comments on the two events. The interpretation is based on an adult's point of view. Jennifer was not keen on watching the video but she wanted me to watch her (in the video '*Jumping on the twister*'). Maybe Jennifer has got something else on her mind that she did not have the chance to complete. The activity looks as if it has not been finished or completed yet. The event of 14<sup>th</sup> April adds one more detail to the above aspect. During the circle time Jennifer brought the same toy and asked the practitioner to play with that. In this case Jennifer wanted adult's involvement in the activity, which did not happen in the event of 10th April. If the child has participated in or seen people play the original version of the twister then it is likely that she needs the involvement of a person to give orders. In this way Jennifer recommends to the adult which activity should be the next, during circle time. Her effort was rejected by the practitioner completely even though Jennifer placed the twister in front of her. Jennifer's face initially was smiling, after the practitioner's answer her face became serious (present moment). She just stood up waiting and looking also at the camera. It seems like Jennifer cannot understand why the practitioner said 'no' to her. She is not sure what to do. She wants to play that game. The second answer of practitioner makes her go back to the area where she found the game but instead to placing it in the drawer, as has been requested by practitioner, she unfolded the game ignoring the adult's order (secondary adjustment). She is determined about her decision to play with the twister. The practitioner gets cross and she removes the toy from her hands, gathering the rest of the children in the carpet area. It is clear that the child here is not behaving according to adults expectations. How will the child react to this treatment?

*2:22. I was trying to find with the camera Jennifer. She was not there. Ian was already in the tower and he waved to me. I noticed that Jennifer was trying to step quietly on the stairs going up to the tower.*

(14<sup>th</sup> April 'Twister' MOVO2884 video data).

Jennifer and Ian are responding to the practitioner's attitude by withdrawing from the circle area and going up to the tower (see further Appendix B.4.3§6). When the practitioner notices that she is not yet on the carpet she reminds Jennifer what she should do.

*The practitioner notices her and says 'Get your shoes out of the tower'. Jennifer is crawling and she hides herself in the other side of the tower. 'Let me see everybodys face!! Everybody put your face out!' The practitioner says (2:47). 'Shall we start with the hello song first!'*

(14<sup>th</sup> April 'The twister' MOVO2884)

The two children are in the tower instead of the circle time. Another practitioner calls them to go back – here the children avoid the adult's agenda using secondary adjustment (Corsaro, 2003, 2005). The practitioner starts singing a song first giving the children chance to choose with which song they would like to start with. Children's participation in the decision is permitted only to the level of deciding which song to sing. The above fragment of the same video of 14<sup>th</sup> April shows that Jennifer and Ian finally went to the circle area but they did not participate in the singing activity. In the next fragment there is a paradox in the whole story which actually explains the reason why the whole video is described in so much detail.

The practitioner started talking:

*'Riggght...now let's see who is felling happy today!' Carly says 'Let me see your happy faces!' 'Yeeeeahhh thumbs up for happy faces!' 'Who is feeling sad today? Let me see your sad faces!' 'mmmmmm thumbs down mmmmm' 'and who is a bit bobble !' 'You are bobble? You are in the middle?' Ian is looking at what the others are doing, Jennifer is still on the floor between the wardrobe and the drawer.*

(14<sup>th</sup> April 'The twister' MOVO2884 video data)

As it can be seen from adult's planning on this day, there was the intention to speak about feelings, sad and happy faces. The twister has got exactly happy and sad faces. As the video shows the practitioner rejects from the beginning the twister that Jennifer brought to her following her own agenda. When the same context comes as part of the discussion during the circle time all of the three protagonists (Jennifer, Ian and Arthur) ignore the practitioner. The children have been excluded from making the decision about the planning although they gave adults the chance to do this. When the adult presents the topic in her own way the children ignore her withdrawing completely from the activity. Thus the developing view of the curriculum that Ian and Jennifer may have is that the 'practitioner does what she wants without listening to our recommendations' (a possible narrative on the present moment, Stern, 2004).

Jennifer's key worker, her mother and Jennifer herself (through the routine cards) argue that she does not like the circle time at all. Based on what the key worker and the child's mother said, it seems that although Jennifer is not keen on circle time at least in the above video she tries to compromise adult's interest with her new suggestion. Unfortunately, her recommendation was rejected. In the Mosaic of the events as Table 4.8 shows, there is one more event that took place on 15<sup>th</sup> April where Jennifer took the twister again after snack time and invited me to play. More children came over and said 'On the green!', indicating the colour the participants should step on. It seems that 'the twister' game was still on Jennifer's mind. On 15<sup>th</sup> April the way that the twister game is taking place is clearer. However, the above event was not taken into the adults' next planning (the planning has been checked) although I reported the event to them since the first observation. This shows that the adult's decisions about the design of future planning do not always taking into consideration what the child is doing during the 'free play' time. Both of the events took place after snack, and during the circle time. In the case of the after snack time the event was not taken into consideration by the adults as they were focus on the delivery of the toast bread and fruit. In the case of circle time the child was prevented from following her own agenda with the practitioner focusing on emotional health of children (EYFS, 2007).

Thus the shared meaning is far away (Jordan, 2004), although both adults and children have goals concerned with 'smiling' faces. The child is playing with the smiling and sad faces twister, the practitioner wants to see how they are feeling during the circle time but the practitioner rejects the child's way of reaching the same aim. Jennifer refuses to participate in the twister game in the 17 June video MOVO4595 when finally practitioner Betty grasps the chance Jordan gave to her (see the Mosaic of the events in Table 4.8).



The last event shows that ‘the present moment’ plays a significant role in a child’s decision to be involved in an activity. This kind of ‘present moment’ is different from the ‘present moment’ embedded in the video analysis. The video analysis ‘present moment’ is correlated with the lived story and feelings. The second kind of ‘present moment’ is correlated with child’s interest in the ‘here and now’ situation associated with her interest and choice and what Stern calls (2004:7) ‘kairos’-propitious moment-the opportunity that child is giving to adult for creating curriculum together with practitioner. For three days in a row Jennifer was interested in the above game, when finally the practitioner invited children to play after one month and a half Jennifer refused to participate, preferring to play outside.

#### *4.3.3 The Present moment in the ‘here and now’ situation and the curriculum*

In this section three events are reported related to the meaning of the ‘present moment’ as ‘I am doing my choice’ in the flow of the activity. In the first one Ian and Jennifer are involved; in the second one only Jennifer and, in the third one, only Ian. The following Table 4.9 shows the Mosaic of the events. It will become clear from the prior video event 28FEMOVO2158-59 ‘Listening to the CD player’ that for the first time music is incorporated in the programme. The music was partly circle time and was named ‘Singing time’ where children and practitioner sing songs together songs as part of the routine. Here for the first time practitioner Caroline is bringing a CD and she places it right at the time Jennifer was playing with the spaghetti (see above). The data shows that all parts (adults and children) have enjoyed the process. Only the last event 18<sup>th</sup> of March distract child’s focus on the activity due to the fact that practitioner were creating noise turning the radio on and off while the children were dancing.

**Table 4.9 The Mosaic of the Events the curriculum in ‘here and now’ situation**

28FEMOVO2158-59 “Listening to the CD player” video data	28FEMOVO2161 “clap your little hands” video data	Children’s comments on the video: “I want to see it!” (Jennifer) “hahahaaha.....again!” (Ian)	Routine cards: The child said “no” to singing time card but he indicates the CD player
Practitioner’s comments: “They enjoy it!” (Caroline)	The planning of Children’s Interests	28FEMOVO2162 “circle time and clap your little hands”	18 <sup>th</sup> March “circle time and clap your little hands- MOVO2524 video data

**‘Clap your little hands’**

The following video clips describe children’s reaction when they are listening to the music on the CD player for the first time. Initially Jennifer was playing in the spaghetti corner while all this time Ian and Henry were sitting in front of the CD player and are giggling. Jennifer leaves the tray with the spaghetti and goes to sit at the small table to listen to the music as well:

**‘Listening to the CD player’**

*The CD player is playing the song ‘the wheels on the bus’. Jennifer, Ian, Henry, Denise and two more children are standing up in front of the CD player. They are listening to the song. Ian is laughing while Jennifer is doing the gesture of the horn with her hands (00:12). Jennifer, Ian and Henry are going closer listening to the song. Ian is laughing (video still 15- 00:42). Jennifer is going closer she is moving up and down listening to the radio ‘The people on the bus are going up and down’ (1:01). Ian and Jennifer are laughing. They are listening to the music laughing at the same time. The song has been finished.*

(28<sup>th</sup> February ‘Listening to the CD player’ MOV02158-59, video data)

In the next video the practitioner noticed what children were doing and decided to join them by sitting at the drawing table and encouraging them to draw a picture listening, to the music at the same time. This is one of the few times that children have been observed using the writing table. The majority of children had gathered at the writing table (close to the CD player) without the practitioner calling them. It has been noticed that even if children were changing activity they were most probably listening to the music.

**‘Clap your little hands’**

*(2:10) The song ‘lets go drive in the car!’ is playing on the radio. Ian is playing with his car and stops drawing, while Henry also stops drawing and listens to the song. (3:31) Ian moves to the next table while Henry starts running around the big table as if he was a car. The song stops and Henry stopped running as well. Ian goes over to the water tray and Jennifer is sitting on the small table drawing with a practitioner and some other children. (4:20) on the radio the song ‘clap your little hands!’ starts. Jennifer puts the pencil down and starts clapping her hands (present moment). The practitioner follows her doing the same and singing at the same time. ‘Well done!’ the practitioner says to Jennifer smiling. Jennifer claps her knees as*

*the song requests and the, practitioner does the same. They are clapping their 'smelly feet' as the song shows.*

(28<sup>th</sup> February 'Clap your little hands' MOVO2161 video data)

While Jennifer participates actively in the activity, Ian does not do the gestures but he is attending the rest of the group laughing and observing (Appendix B.4.3.§6). The whole event has lasted more than 15 minutes, and they stop due to tidy up time and circle time. Ian's reaction to the event was particularly interesting when he listened to the practitioner announce tidy up time.

*Once Ian hears that the CD player has stopped he moves quickly from the carpet area and he goes close to the CD player thinking (present moment, 00:13). 'Do you enjoy that dancing and singing?' the practitioner asks the children. 'Yeaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaah' all the children respond, while Ian is laughing and he goes back to the carpet.*

(28<sup>th</sup> February 'Clap your little hands' MOVO2161 video data)

The above event is entirely based on children's initiatives - all of the children are moving closer, they are laughing, they are doing the gestures, and they are doing bodily movements according to the song. They ask me for the first time to watch the video again.

### ***Ian's Comment's***

*'Did you like the music today?' I asked him. 'Yes' he said and he started laughing. 'Again!' he said and he pointed to the CD player. 'Do you want to listen to the music again?' 'Yeah!' he said and he laughed. Then he went to eat.*

(28<sup>th</sup> February, Field Notes)

*Angeliki: Ian, I would like you to tell me which of these activities you like the most (the researcher showed him the routine cards)*

*Ian looks at the cards. He indicates to me the outside play picture.*

*Angeliki: Do you like playing out?*

*Ian: Yeah!!!*

*Angeliki: Do you like singing time?*

*Ian: NO!!!!*

*He gets down and he goes in front of the CD player "Again!" again!"*

*He says "Show me the CD player".*

*Angeliki: Would you like to listen to the music?*

*Ian: Yeahhhhhh (Ian answers laughing)*

*Angeliki: What about going to singing over there?*

*Ian: Noooooooooo (Ian answers and he moves his head and hands showing the CD player).*

(3<sup>rd</sup> March, Routine Cards, Field Notes)

***Jennifer's comments (watching the video)***

*For the first time Jennifer came and asked me to watch the video 'Angeliki, I want to see!' 'The video with the 'clap your little hands?'' 'Yeah I want it'. I show her the video. Zoe, Ian and Henry are there as well. Ian and Henry start laughing while Jennifer and Zoe start doing the gestures again clapping. 'Do you like listening to the music on the radio' 'Yeah' the children answer me, laughing. All the children watching the video laugh until the end of the film.*

(28<sup>th</sup> February, Field notes)

From the above events it is clear that almost all the group participated. Some children were doing the gestures in the same way as the practitioner showed while others, like Ian and Allan, were listening sitting in an area that gives them an overview of the activity. Jennifer is laughing, doing the gestures, saying 'again and again'. Jennifer initially directs a practitioner and then together with the rest of her peers does the gestures with the practitioner. Ian, together with Allan, experiences the event in a different way- watching and listening (28<sup>th</sup> February 'Clap your little hands' MOVO2161 video data). Ian was also chatting with his friend. He indicated the CD player to Allan and cuddled his friend's shoulder. In his interest is also the outside area as the two boys were moving closer to the window looking outside. They talk and then they look at the other children. Ian encourages Allan to go closer saying 'look' to his friend. They are laughing.

There are two ways to experience the event: participating actively dancing and singing, or watching and listening. The curriculum gives them the chance to enjoy the time in the way that they want. The practitioner watched the children's reaction to the music and took the opportunity to leave the planning aside and follow the children's instructions. She followed the children's request and appears to enjoy the time shared with them at the moment. The 'here and now' situation determined a common sphere of understanding.

In addition to this, during the circle time the feeling I perceived was a relaxed and calm atmosphere (28FEMOVO2162 '*circle time and clap your little hands*'). The children are going to circle time without a practitioner needing to try to convince them to go to the carpet. During the circle time only the practitioner's voice who was singing the 'hello song' was audible, the children were quiet and calm. Ian sat on the rocking chair and Jennifer went and sat on the carpet. None of them do any of the gestures but this time no one tried to run away from the area to avoid the activity. Practitioner Caroline comments on the video make her feeling satisfaction (Appendix B.4.3§7). The programme here was working according to the children's best interest and the activity has been applied to the circle time making activity more enjoyable. The above event was not expected. The 'Planning of Children's Interest' reports:

*'Zoe, Jennifer, Ian, David, Aida, Henry were all sitting at the writing table and a member of staff put on the CD and it got all children singing and doing what the man said on the CD i.e. clapping hands, stamping feet, touching head, the children enjoyed it so much it was played 4 times.'*

(28<sup>th</sup> February '*Planning of Children's Interest*')

Comparing the circle time of '*the twister*' event with the present circle time the audience perceived a completely opposite feeling. Initially the children are quiet and although they are not participating in the singing time the practitioner is not struggling to convince them to sit on the carpet. The practitioner decided to repeat the CD player activity in the circle time in the next few days. It has been observed in the circle time videos that the whole group was participating in the activity only when the music was about to start (video data). When the practitioners encouraged children in singing time the children's reaction was similar to the '*twister circle time*' event. It was then observed that after 18<sup>th</sup> March the activity is gradually losing the interest of the children in association with Ian, Allan and Jennifer (Appendix B.4.3§8). The video (18March MOVO2524) is a clear indicator of the above argument. The video firstly shows Jennifer's effort to access the CD player that was in a high position, trying to put the same song on again (a similar finding to the Greek case) as a practitioner stopped, to leave the other member of staff to prepare the camera for documentation. Ian's attitude as a good listener appears also on the same video. The practitioner has put on the CD player the song '*Clap your little hands*'. Jennifer was close to the big table doing the gestures as the song said. However, the practitioners' effort to video film the event was based on Carl's attitude who was fascinated listening to the song for the first time. In the whole event Ian plays the role of observer and listener as he is

occupied with his car but when the music stops, he stands up to see what is going on. When the music is on again he is occupied again with the car. The rest of the children are distracted. On the opposite side is Carl who looks fascinated and he is in the focus of the practitioner. The practitioner's dialogue is so loud that their voices are covering the music and the children instead of enjoying the activity, are looking at them. Jennifer takes the initiative to go and turn on the CD player. The practitioner goes to prevent Jennifer from reaching the CD player. Finally the children start fighting with each other grabbing the coats that were close to them.

Many issues about pedagogical documentation are raised in the above video. Disrespecting a child's right to get involved in one activity in a quieter atmosphere. I was distracted as well trying to understand why the practitioner was turning the CD player on and off and most probably the children were even more distracted as well. Adult participation in the child motivated activity has been found to be either interfered with or ignored. Both approaches have been found problematic to the matter of children's well being. There are two events that clarify the above argument in more detail. In the first the protagonist is Jennifer and in the second Ian. Both of the activities are child initiated.

### **'The Jar and the milk'**

The event with '*the jar and the milk*' takes place after snack time. The children are preparing for the next activity (going out) while the practitioners tidy up the table. Jennifer having finished her snack is still at the main table starting pouring the left over milk and water into the bottle (see Appendix B.4.3§9). Practitioner Caroline having observed and participated in the whole episode agrees that the event was a good initiative for introducing children into helping with tidy up time (see Appendix B.4.3§10). While she admits that the whole activity was an extension of the water tray corners, which most of the time is equipped with cups and bottles. Clearly here Jennifer extends the previous routine to the real life participating in a mature activity (Rogoff, 2003). The child is very focussed. The activity was her initiative. After the practitioner becomes involved in the activity she follows her instructions mechanically. When the practitioner intervenes she gets frustrated. She tells her 'Noooo!' and she tries to explain to her what they could do. The practitioner recommends that she use the jar, without bringing back the bottle. Jennifer is frustrated and she breathes heavily saying 'Aaaaaaaaaaaaaah' showing her frustration (present moment). Practitioner Caroline having noticed what happened helps her opening the jar but she directs her without leaving any freedom. Even when she is trying to show Caroline that there is one left, Jennifer is breathing deeply again and touching her face with stress. She

follows the practitioner's directions but finally she withdraws from the activity taking some toast and going to eat it on the rocking chair, while more children are going to help Caroline tidy up. Here Jennifer had the chance to be involved in activities related to real materials but when she tried to advance her skills into more challenging activities (pouring in the bottle and not in the jar) she was prevented or directed and disturbed by adults' intention to finish tidying up. Thus the child is not taking her time to do experiments but her effort is disturbed by the adults' schedule. In the above video Jennifer's intention is not clear. It is not sure whether she would like to help in the tidying up process or if she was testing the precise pouring into the bottle. Her goals are not fully clear. However, as has been mentioned in the description of the event, the practitioner dominates the child's actions at such a level that the child mechanically obeys but the child gets stressed (facial expression) and at the end she leaves the activity altogether.

#### **‘The traffic signs’ (case of Ian)**

The following event, that is based on the case of Ian, draws attention to one of the most important issues that has been found to be problematic in the English case; the curriculum in the here and now situation. The protagonist is Ian, a boy who is really keen on bikes, cars, trains and aeroplanes. The following video will present how Ian was trying to design his own planning and to what extent he did not find the help he needed. The event took place outside with Ian primarily riding his bike. He stopped and he started to construct the pieces of the traffic signs he found in a sack outside. He placed it on the fence exactly where on 19<sup>th</sup> June a practitioner has organised a similar activity. After preparing the area he started to encourage other children to stop showing the STOP traffic sign (see Appendix B.4.3.§11).

Although since the beginning I had drawn the event to the practitioner's attention, the practitioner observed Ian for a while and then she left, ignoring what the child was doing. Reviewing the written documents, Ian's achievement has been reported as follows: ‘Outside play road signs and construction’ with the initials of the child (Planning for Children's Interests). Nothing else has been mentioned. This means that although the adult became aware of the event she did not help the child when he was trying to encourage the other children into his activity. According to the EYFS (2007) the adult should work observing children in their achievements and transfer their experience into the next planning. In the next planning nothing has been transferred. In the next two visits the child has not been observed any more to be involved in a similar activity. The child here is using equipment that it is stored and not part of the planning. Ian has been extending his

interest in cars from being stuck in the sand or mud. All the rules are designed by the child himself and when nobody is listening to him, he decides to show to the other children how they are supposed to behave on the road. In this way Ian has extended his entire knowledge about the bikes into an experience important for his life long learning. Additionally Ian has been observed going with his mother walking from his house, to the primary school to leave his elder sister and then coming back to the centre. Thus the child is transferring here experience from life out of the centre in connection with his love for bikes and cars (the practitioner Caroline interview).

### **Analysis**

A considerable amount of data in the case of England shows children intention to transfer items from one organised area to the other. This section will argue, based on the observation and video data, that transferring through the curriculum is correlated with three different meanings. The first is transferring as causing change, extending and explore (Jennifer's examples). The second is transferring as a means to involve the personal interest in the planning (Ian's examples), and transferring as a way to avoid the adult's agenda ('Twister circle time'; Corsaro, 2003, 2005a).

Transferring materials from one area to another has been observed mostly in England. The transferring process in Greece took place only during the circle time, while in England it is a factor that goes beyond adult's expectations about the child and how they can extend the activity during his/her involvement. It is suggested that the considerable difference between the two cases is associated with the construction of the planned and unplanned programme. Transferring is related with extending. For instance, in the case of Ian (see section 4.4) through his interest in wheels, the cars and the trains, he transmits his interest into the planned and unplanned activities. The table of events Table 4.6 (see Appendix, B) is a short overview of the events correlated with the transferring process in the same room or from the babies room to the toddlers room. In all these cases there is a general agreement among the practitioners that the child is causing unexpected changes to the planning of the activities. However, the reason why those events are codified in the aforementioned table is due to the fact that practitioners are either trying to stop a child's intentions or they completely ignore what the child is doing, in this way the sharing of meaning is far away and presenting as problematic (Jordan, 2004). Missing a child's intention leads to missing their perspective. In the transformation process it seems that there is a metaphorical argument between the child's intentions and practitioner's planning. In this metaphorical 'quarrel' a child's agency and participation is embedded (like the



example with the water and the play dough). However, a third component is involved – the material and the changes that it can cause. The most significant events are the cases with the water tray, the washing the doll's head event, the spaghetti event and the play dough. For example, in the water tray event although the practitioners recognise the child's intention to play with the water in the kitchen they eliminate the access initially banning the area and in the second event placing the two water trays together (see Table 4.6, Appendix B).

Reviewing the video data, it is clear that there is a misunderstanding between the child, the activity and the adult. Following Jordan's (2004) model of shared meaning, it is clear that in the 'clap your little hands' event the adult and the children are close to sharing of the meaning and the participation is based on both adult's and child's involvement without any signal of disagreement. However, the example of the glitter and the play dough presents a more problematic notion of participation not because the child is not eager to learn but because the adults are playing a dominant role influenced by their expectations. In the spaghetti and play dough activity the child is perceived as participant following adult's direction and uses the material in a specific way. The point that the practitioner, who has the intention of reaching specific goals, does not consider how these goals will be changed due to unexpected causes the material can create when it comes into children's hands. In the case of England examples significant examples of secondary adjustment have not been found. This is correlated with the structure of the programme. The more structured the programme is, like in the case of the circle time, the more often the secondary adjustment appears. However, the analysis of the English case is based on the Rogoff's theory due to the fact that the EYFS (DfES, 2007) is a more flexible framework than the Greek case.

It seems from the aforementioned description that the child's agency as described by Corsaro (2005a) is applied to the situation of peer interaction and very structured programmes or activities. However, the meaning of interpretative reproduction is still significantly important as this embeds the changes the child can cause (transformation).

Rogoff (2003:258) states that thinking is not a solo activity and as such demands social interaction. It takes place in relation to personal, interpersonal and institutional planes where the individual understands the goals of the society getting familiar with the cultural tools such as literacy and mathematics. Therefore, according to Rogoff, thinking is strongly correlated with the particular situation. She clarified that this correlation is not mechanical. It is more creative as the person in references with previous experience found

connection with the partner through the use of the inherited cultural materials. The partners using the cultural tools to solve a problem through the process they extend and contribute in this way in the future. However, Rogoff's notion of the tools is correlated with the language, literacy, mathematics and individuals effort to become familiar with the tools of his /hers society or a different one. More simple is correlated with thinking and acquisition of skills. She names artefacts objects such as books, hammers and computers that are embedded with the ideas of the user and producer that basically helps on the practices, her focus is on how the person is learning to use the tools of the particular community. Thus the meaning of tool is strongly correlated with the cognition, culture and expectations.

Lenz Taguchi (2010) states that the in objects and the materials provided emerge the dominant discourses of each society (similar to Corsaro and Rogoff) however Lenz Taguchi's notion of the objects is moving beyond a binary situation. The example with the spaghetti, the CD player and play dough shows how the material and the changes that cause have determined children's participation or non participation respectively. The practitioner's flexibility or not in changing the applied programme is crucial in capturing the 'present moment' (Stern, 2004) – to understand that the child in this particular moment is living a story and respectively sharing with her. Thus, it seems that interrelated what Jordan (2004: page) terms 'shared meaning' with what Stern (2004: 151) names the 'present moment', it seems that the mutual intersubjectivity which determines the participation is achieved when the participants reach what Stern calls 'kairos' in the 'now moment' (the need to act) and moving to the 'moment of meeting' (Stern, 2004: 151) where the partners are becoming aware of each other's experience.

Looking for instance in the example with Jennifer and the bottle of the milk, practitioner Caroline reaches the 'moment of meeting' hearing and seeing Jennifer get frustrated. She acts upon recommending an alternative solution trying to 'fix' the mistake but her role is so dominant that the child, after completing the mission withdraws from the activity without going back to participate. In the 'clap your little hands' example the 'moment of meeting' is completed successfully and the child's participation has been achieved without a significant problem. It is also clear from the data that the child is more eager to talk about the activity. From the above event seems that the 'shared meaning' in Jordan's model needs to be unfolded. In the example of the bottle there is a 'shared meaning' but as missed opportunity of 'kairos' (Stern, 2004) 'if no action is taken, one's destiny will be changed anyway, but differently, because one did not act. It is a small window of becoming and opportunity' (Stern, 2004: 7).

In the English case the meaning of the ‘present moment’ is initially embedded in the transcription of the video showing the moment the child is thinking in relation with the intersubjectivity (shared meaning with the adult). The perception is not clear but the audience can see that the child is silent, doing some gesture or facial expression. Omitting the narrative as presented by Stern (2004), due to the fact that the child’s comments are missing, this study points only to those moments that the child seems to ‘think’. The different way of analysis between the two countries is due to the lack of comments in the case in England.

This study has identified two different notions of ‘present moment’, those that are related with ‘thinking’ and ‘feelings’ and that relates to what Stern (2004) names as ‘kairos’ associated with opportunities and this has been found both in the cases of Greece and England. Stern’s (2004: 58) definition of sharing the present moment is as follows:

‘The present moment as a lived story can also be shared. When that happens intersubjectivity starts to take on flesh. The moment when someone can participate in another’s lived story, or can create a mutually lived story with them, a different kind of human contact is created. More than just an exchange of information has occurred. That is the secret of the here and now’.

However, the meaning of ‘kairos’ in present moment in the aforementioned event is correlated with the factor that determined the participation and extension, changing or advancing the activity. It is what Rogoff et al. (2003) discuss as the level where the assessment is taking place in the ‘intent participation’. The adult examines to what extent the child is eager to learn and respectively changes or advances the activity to guarantee the child’s contribution. Alternatively, the ‘present moment’ in association with feelings is correlated with reflection on others’ comments or actions. For instance Jennifer is thinking and saying ‘No’ to the practitioner who grasps the bottle of the milk.

The data from England shows that the present moment determines not only the participation but also the way that the child is going to participate. For instance, in the example on the table with Ian and the cartoon car, Ian initially has been a good observer. Having watched an experienced practitioner try to move them from the kitchen area (Corsaro’s, 2005 theory of priming events), the next day Ian is ‘driving’ around with his car, observing for a long time the other children who are not following the rule (not

involved most probably to avoid being in trouble). When he sees practitioner is aware of the situation without taking any notice, he gives up the car and he goes and gets involved again in the water activity (intent participation).

In Jennifer's case with the play dough, the priming experience of being prevented adding more water to the tray, and the white van, makes her participate following adult's expectations-feeling the sticky material. The real perception is missing. This is only what the observer's eye can see, what the child is thinking is not clear but the child this time is following adult's expectations. Returning to the example with the spaghetti the child again follows adult's expectations after twice not having received any answer to her questions. However, this time the material determines the participation – 'bad smell'!

The example with Ian and the traffic signs is the most extreme case. The child is eager, but the practitioner is ignorant of his intentions. The child intends to participate, taking the lead but the practitioner does not intervene at all. This example is full of feelings, inasmuch as it reveals the 'present moments' in the non-verbal lived story. The camera falling into his hands becomes the mean (material turn) that shows those feelings and voices, the camera is therefore an active agent in the child's hands. The fact that the child is 'feeling or thinking' it is a fact 'its 'reality' is not questioned or examined. We know it too well' (Stern, 2004: 137). However following Stern's notion of the present moment, what determines the 'shared meaning' is not just the awareness but what Stern's calls 'intersubjectivite consciousness' (Stern, 2004: 125). The 'intersubjective consciousness', it is what in Jordan's model is determined as second model of sharing where the child and the teacher are close to each other. The 'clap your little hands' example is such a sharing of meaning. However in the rest of the aforementioned examples there is sharing of meaning too. The practitioner is aware of the events and in some cases acts upon them. The shared meaning in those cases is not determined child's participation, as the child finally withdraw. In these cases there is what Stern names as 'minimal consciousness' or just awareness of the experience. In the intersubjectivite consciousness 'the two people cocreate an intersubjectivity experience in a shared present moment .....you have your own experience plus the other's experience of your experience as reflected in their eyes, body, tone of voice and so on' (Stern, 2004: 125). The experience may be slightly different as we know for instance in the '*clap your little hands*' example that all the participants enjoyed the moment but the experience from both parts (teacher-child) is 'mutually validated' (Stern, 2004:125). Stern argues that the 'intersubjectivite consciousness' is demoted in the now

situation and not in 'a potential space of shared knowledge' (Stern, 2004: 126). This is the crucial difference in Jordan's model.

The meaning of the 'intersubjective consciousness' captures what Jordan's model missed - the feelings. For instance, in Jennifer's example with the water in the play dough tray there is a common sharing of meaning. Both parties are close to each other. Participation has been corrupted due to the feelings. In the notion of feelings there is awareness of the event - Jennifer wants to pour more water into the tray. So all parties know 'what' the child is doing. The participation is corrupted due to the misunderstanding of the 'why', - why Jennifer wants to pour more water into the tray. It seems that Jennifer intends to participate in the whole process more actively. The practitioner's action makes Jennifer 'think'-why does the practitioner not let me pour more water (mutual gaze with practitioner) reflecting into practitioner's prevention to pour more water. Jennifer is not clear if she is thinking or wondering, or is upset with adult's action while the practitioner is getting upset saying 'No!' These feelings determined the participation and the way the child is going to be engaged in the activity. The engagement obviously is related with the interaction with others and as Stern discusses, here are the social origins. What the child is doing or the way practitioner acts upon the way the child is working as a reflection as a mirror. Therefore the child is pouring the water down on the floor (secondary adjustment) reflecting on practitioners 'No'. This is what Stern calls 'negative form of intersubjective consciousness' (Stern, 2004: 131) in which 'there is a failure to cocreate an expected experience or a failure of matching or fittedness'.

The above events show the need for examination of the temporal architecture of the shared meanings as they are captured in the 'present moment', the non-verbal lived experience. As Stern (2004) states, this 'lived experience' is the key component for the change. Participants in the present moment are partners in what Stern called 'intersubjective matrix' (Stern, 2004: 77). The intersubjective matrix is more correlated with the sharing of feelings within the participants. It is a metaphorical space where the participants through the bodily gestures, facial expressions, tones of the voice can feel the same thing. It is a cocreate dialogue with other's feelings and thoughts as if the other saying 'I know what are you feeling' or better think (Stern, 2004: 81). For instance, in the example with the milk and the bottle practitioner Caroline seeing Jennifer saying 'No!.....ahhhhhhh' takes the initiative to encourage the child to keep playing as if telling her 'I know you are frustrated...let's try with the jar' (practitioner Caroline's interview). However, further interpretation of the data in this way will be problematic as the child's comments are

missing. Stern's emphasis on the feelings on the experience domain is strongly correlated with the intentions (Stern, 2004: 86) and in this study the children's intention are not clear due to interruption of the activity or child's withdrawal from the activity. He states that in order to capture the whole lived story which lasts just a few seconds, the who, why, where, what, when, and how must be defined. Those are the elements of the 'present moment', in all aforementioned events some of the above elements are missing and that would be a challenge for future research.

In Jordan's model of shared meaning, the event is captured as a whole. In the examples with Jennifer and the milk and play dough clearly there is a shared meaning between the adult and the child. However, there is no participation as there is a metaphorical 'disagreement' between what the child wants to do and what the adult is doing. From the transcription of the videos, it is clear that there are plenty of present moments through out the text. However, there is only one 'now moment' which actually determined the participation or not.

In Figure 4.3 (above) there is a graphical representation of the unfolding temporal architecture of the shared meaning in the present moment as has been depicted on the above paradigms. Rogoff's theory is embedded in the 'shared meaning' and the intentionality of the child's action. Corsaro's theory relates to the child's action after the 'now moment'. All these factors together determines child's participation or not in the activity. The present moment can emerge on a second that is depicted as a facial expression, one sentence, pause, feeling or thought. The main element of 'moving along' (finding common path) in local level (Stern, 2004: 150) is that the two parts either just being aware or being conscious of the same intention. Sharing the same intention is called 'sense of fittedness' (Stern, 2004: 172) and it is the last part of the present moment where two people have shared the same intention-doing something together.

#### **4.4 Playing with bikes. What happens when the children play outside? (When adults misunderstand children's intention to do things.)**

'I love my bike there! Let's go out to play with that!' (Arthur)

In the previous section the 'present moment' as a non-verbal lived story was examined to determine children's comprehension of the organised activities. This section will analyse 'teaching to the moment' through the children's play with bikes, wheelbarrows and scooters. Data collected for the study showed a continuous contradiction between

children's interests and the organised programme. It was found that for a certain period of time in the setting in England children were spending more time playing with bikes and wheelbarrows rather than with the organised activities, especially during the period children were playing in the outside area. Starting with the case of Arthur, the youngest boy involved in the research, it will be argued that practitioners did not effectively capture and extend children's best interests in relation to bikes, scooters and wheelbarrows as this has been illuminated, framed and designed by children themselves. It has been found that due to the adult's efforts to turn children's attention towards their (adult) expectations and goals practitioners missed children's stories during the play with wheeled toys, focusing only on what children are doing in the organised activities.

The study also found that children experience their play with the bikes differently. For example, Ian and Allan extended their games with the bike and the scooter creating a problem solving situation, while Arthur (and his friend Mark) asked for adult support in any obstacle he found during his game. The bikes and wheelbarrows were found in children's pictures as well. Similarly with the curriculum, the research methods have been influenced by children's interests in the bikes and wheelbarrows, as children were often asking me to follow them on their journeys riding their bikes and video filming them. In this way the 'walking with video' process has been determined by the children themselves. The bikes and the wheelbarrows play a central role in the children's play at home as the parent's interviews confirm. What has been found, however it is firstly the practitioners' unawareness about children's intention to design their learning around the bikes (as in the planning of the children's best interest the bikes have never being part of the observation) and secondly practitioner's intentions to eliminate children's action by reducing children's access to the bikes at any time, misunderstanding what children can learn through this type of play. Practitioners argument will be examined in the analysis.

#### *4.4.1 The child's points of view of the planned activities*

##### ***The bike events -Arthur's case***

Arthur is the youngest participant in this research. He drew my attention to the following topics: the bike, the fence, and the conkers and bubble paper (video data, parent's comments, child's comments, routine cards, tours). In all these events Arthur is firstly driving his car and then he indicates to me the trajectories of his interests. Arthur is keen on playing with his bike while most of the time he is not involved in the planned activities organised by adults. As his mother discusses, playing with bikes is a habit transferred

from home to the setting and due to the fact the programme gives him the freedom of choice she believes that this is a factor that makes Arthur enjoy the three days per week he spends in the setting (see Appendix B4.4 § 1).

Arthur was not keen on taking pictures but usually he invited me to follow him on his tours (walking with or without video). He likes collecting conkers and going around with his bike. In the routine cards he insists again and again that his favourite activity is playing 'out there!' in the garden with his bike (8<sup>th</sup> July, *Routine cards*). Reviewing the three focus days 10<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> June, it has been agreed with his key worker Caroline that Arthur was not interested in the planned activities. For example, looking at the Appendix (B.4.4§2) the reported pictures represented the way the programme was organised on the 17<sup>th</sup> June. The inside activities were related with the recognition of the colour red and painting while the outside activities had again painting activities, water play, climbing and a tray with different materials. Also part of the programme was face painting after snack time. Similarly with Arthur, Ian and Allan who attend the group the same morning, declined to be involved in the programme. Arthur, since the time he arrived in the day care centre, went straight away to play with his bike ignoring the organised areas. As his mother and the practitioner report Arthur is a child that he has got a clear idea of what he likes (see Appendix, B.4.4§3).

The fact that the previous day Arthur's mother had looked at some of the videos involved in this study (as part of practitioner's consultation with her), highlights the importance of parental involvement in discussion of the video and the child's life. Arthur's mother was aware of the exact activities her child was involved in at the day care centre and she was more comfortable to combine the day care activities with his home habits. Reviewing the planning for the 17<sup>th</sup> June it became noticeable that, although the painting process consisted of pine cones, Arthur was not involved at all being keen on playing with his bike and not involved in any painting activity despite the fact that all the data shows his interest in collecting conkers from the trees (observation, walking with video, parents comments, video data, field notes).

***'Waiting for the door to open'***

*Arthur arrives at 9:30. He goes over to the carpet. He picks up a green toothbrush he found close to the bookcase. He stays there without doing anything. He looks at the outside door. The door of the outside area is closed. (9:32) He goes over to the big table. He picks up a large painting brush but then he leaves and goes over to*



*the carpet again and he sits without doing anything. When practitioner Caroline opens the door he stands up and runs directly out and he is goes and takes the red bike without pedals. He rides around.*

(17<sup>th</sup> June 'Waiting for the door to open' Field Notes)

The above field notes show that the child is waiting for the door to open and goes out to play. He had a look around in the organised areas but although he took the brush in his hands, he was still waiting for the door to be opened. In the morning preparation of the activities area the practitioners were concerned about the children's lack of engagement in the organised area and they had decided not to open the door of the garden trying to keep children occupied in the main area (morning discussion on the planning). However, as it has been reported here, neither the child was involved in any activity in the room nor practitioners keep the door finally closed, decided to let children going out (Corsaro, 2003). In the majority of the video film that has been analysed, it has been found that children are riding their bikes and wheelbarrows while at the same time they stop watching what the rest of the children are doing in different parts of the centre (peripheral participation). When an activity seems to be interesting they stand up on their bikes or scooters (intent participation). If they want to participate they get off, if they do not they continue their journey. The video of Arthur 17<sup>th</sup> June, 'Driving the bike 1' MOVO4589 lasts for 10 minutes and it takes place right after Arthur goes to the garden. In the video the child is passing close to the tree with the weather cones many times. Despite his interest in collecting materials from the trees (like sticks and conkers), this time he does not go for painting at all.

Practitioner Caroline also wondered why Arthur was not interested in the organised activity with conkers, while on the tours he was interested and willing to talk, touch and explore their consistency whilst looking for them (Appendix B.4.4.§4). In discussion with the practitioner it was suggested that this happens because Arthur has not found them in their natural environment, as he does with his grandmother (mother's interview Appendix, B.4.4§5).

Following him on his tours (walking with video), it is clear that Arthur has an intention for exploration (confirmed also by his mother). In the applied programme the practitioner found problematic the fact the bikes and wheelbarrows were available at any time (Appendix B.4.4§6). Similar to the cones painting the same day the practitioner has planned 'face painting'. The aim of the activity was to: 'Encourage children to have

shapes, or animals drawn on his/her face, hands and arms' (Planning for the children's interests). However, the majority of the children decline to join the practitioner following her announcement. Ian, Allan, Arthur, Stefanie and Jennifer prefer playing with their bikes, scooters and wheelbarrows rather than going to join the practitioners. Although, they do stop playing with their bikes and scooters and have a look at the activity (17<sup>th</sup> June 'No I want to play with my bike!' Field Notes; Appendix, B.4.4 §7). The practitioner's comments on the field notes were as follows:

*'From my experience of working with other children I was sure that children will enjoy this activity, but they didn't. I was really surprised! I don't know why they did not want to!'*

(17<sup>th</sup> June, Practitioner's Caroline comments, Field Notes)

Additionally, during the interview she reports an issue that it has come up between the manager and the staff of the day care centre related to the disposition of the bikes. The practitioners were insisting on reducing the access to bikes while the manager was against that tactic. However, after watching the videos she admitted that Arthur and the rest of the children who play with bikes made their choices about the activities after passing through the different areas by riding their bikes.

*Even though he is on the bike, he is going to see what everybody else is doing!! He is just, wherever he goes; he is turning around, looking, staring at them and taking in whatever they are doing. Like he had to look at what Jacky was doing with Mark. He had to still turn around and take a look. He must have taken a look and thought 'Hmm, that looks interesting'. Park me bike up. I'll go in and have a look.*

(Practitioner Caroline interview)

The above fragmentation is the practitioner's comments watching the 8<sup>th</sup> July video data ('Driving the bike 2' MOVO4840 Appendix, B.4.4§8). The whole event lasts almost 10 minutes and shows how the child experiences playing with his bike. Arthur seems to go to work with his friends, while occasionally he stops to try something else. What Arthur is thinking every time he stops and watches the others is not clear, as his comments and intention are missing. However it has been argued with the practitioner that the child is on a journey, on his own journey, most probably on the journey to go for work as his dialogue suggests. Practitioner Caroline names the process 'Jump on it', 'stop' and 'go' (Appendix, B.4.4§9) as if the child is riding a bike and going for shopping or standing and observing.

At this point it is worthwhile mentioning that for Arthur and Mark the bicycling journey has a different concept to Ian's and Allan's journeys. With the bike and the scooter Ian and Allan are trying to create a problem solving situation, they try to make obstacles in their journey (Allan's tour and Ian's comments) while Arthur asks for help every time anything is in his way and Mark gets frustrated trying to remove obstacles from his way. For Arthur on his journey with the bike there is an exploratory journey, as every time he finds a stick or conker stops to show to me, for Ian and Allan the bike journey is correlated with a challenge that they are trying to solve it (see the next section and the case of Ian).

#### *4.4.2 The children's perspective of the planned activities: the fence, the bike and the colour green events*

The initial argument in the introductory part of this section will be based on the events taking place on the 10<sup>th</sup> June. The practitioners had decided to introduce the children to the colour green (as the practitioners reported the planning is based on the observations of the previous week and the main topic was about the colour green). Caroline reported to me that the starting point was Jimmy who last week when he was painting on the wall said that 'I am doing something green!' (10<sup>th</sup> June, Field Notes). The above observation makes the staff of the day care centre encourage children to find something green and bring it onto the table in the carpet area(circle time). The prior event of the next video is the following:

*The practitioners encouraged children to try to find something green to bring it to the green table. Arthur and the other children are sitting already on their bikes*  
(10<sup>th</sup> June Prior events 'Green Colour' Field Notes).

Arthur's reaction to the practitioner's call was as follows:

#### ***'When the fence is closed'***

*Arthur is 'driving his car'. He stops to watch those children who are going into the room (-00:30sec) 'Nothing is in this place no more!' he said and he turned his bike and he went in front of the gate on the fence 'What is in there?' he asks me. 'What is inside? What is it?' (00:43sec) 'Where? There?' I ask him 'I can't find what they do it in there!' ----- 'it is closed today! Because the digger is going to come and make some works here!' I said. Lilly goes and looks through the fence as well (00:59)*

*'Oops!!' Arthur says. 'That's why!' I say to him 'Ohhh let's have a look!' he says and he rides his bike continuing his journey.*

(10<sup>th</sup> June, 'When the fence is closed', MOVO4235 video data).

Arthur is not interested in finding items that are the colour green, his attention is on the door of the fence (that today is closed while yesterday was open) and he was playing there with his bike. He mentioned in his comments that he cannot see what is happening there. Similarly the girl in the background of the video is trying to see through the fence. The morning announcement about the green colour is not the first one. After snack time practitioner Betty tried to encourage children to find green items in the garden and bring them to her. At that moment I was with Arthur. The practitioner wanted to involve all the children in the activity and invited me to do the same (see Appendix, B.4.4§10). Trying to invite the child to the activity and satisfy and help the practitioner, many children did not appear interested in the colour green. In addition to this in the next activity (finger painting) the same children Allan, Ian and Arthur clearly articulated their desire to play with their scooters and bikes (Appendix B.4.4§ 11).

From the above episode it is evident that Ian, Arthur and Allan are really enjoying playing with their bikes and scooter but are not keen on the organised activities and they are conscious on that. The practitioners insisted that Allan and Ian did not participate because they never participated in a messy activities while for Arthur they said it is a matter of his age, for instance in the topic with the green colour he does not know yet the colours.

*Later I mention to Caroline and Betty that I have never noticed Ian and Allan to be involved in the programme. 'They never participate in painting activities' Caroline said to me 'nor in the cooking process'.*

(10<sup>th</sup> June, Field Notes)

However, with the cooking process there is one event (Appendix, B.4.4§ 12) with Allan that shows the child is keen on preparing pizza, despite the fact he is very fussy about which food he eats (mother and practitioner confirm). The observation shows that indeed Allan and Ian may are not keen on the messy activities, however there are events such as with the pizza on the 24<sup>th</sup> April, (Field Notes) that shows children's preferences may change depending on the context. For instance, Allan enjoys preparing pizza because he likes to eat pizza. He participated in the cooking process and took a photograph with the

digital blue camera keeping for the rest of the day the digital blue camera on his hands viewing the pizza- photograph saying at all the time 'pia pia!'.

The programme of the 10<sup>th</sup> June (see pictures in Appendix B.4.4§13), as with the 17<sup>th</sup> June and the previous week was more or less based on water play and painting. The finger prints or the face painting was based again on the painting idea. For some children such as Allan, Ian and Arthur who are not keen on painting and messy activities (parents, observation and practitioners reports, children's comments). In the present event it is clear that some children are not interested in the planned activities while for Jennifer, Cindy and Jacky it is according to their interests (painting and messy activities, practitioners and parents confirm). Going back to the event with the fence and the green colour the story has not been finished yet as the practitioner has encouraged me to get involved by inviting Ian and Arthur to participate (see Appendix B.4.4§14).

In the above events the children's intention to go and play in the other part of the garden that was closed in the morning was clear. Using verbal and body expressions indicates to me that they are interested in going the other part of the garden. To my surprise, Arthur although all this time seemingly not interesting in collecting green items, mentioned that 'the grass is green'. He found something green but the spatial restriction did not let him to show it to me in a different way other than just saying 'I want to go there!' Conversely, the practitioner during her effort to activate children's interest is using me as a means to encourage children to participate. From the field notes and my reporting feelings it is becoming evident that in my effort to keep a balance between child's and adult's expectations I am struggling to decide which part to follow. The child is speaking about the green colour beyond the fence and my attention is on the practitioner's call for green items, as she has been asked to do that. Finally, having found something green to encourage children to bring it to the practitioner I was trying to satisfy the adult's expectations but my understanding is that the children did it to satisfy me and not because they really wanted to. I knew from the children's comments that their attention is not on the green items but in the area beyond the fence that previous day they used to play in.

In addition to this the three boys' attitude highlights some pitfalls in the way practitioner are designing the planning of the following day. As it has been reported, the practitioners based their plans on Jimmy's comments '*I am doing something green*' one week ago. Therefore the practitioners integrated and applied this theme to the whole children's programme one week after Jimmy's comment (10<sup>th</sup> June). This plan is also questionable as

it is not clear to what extent it is appropriate to apply a theme that is related to another group of children, as every day different children attend the setting. For children who attend almost every day such as Ian, Allan, and Arthur, in the present event, it seems from their attitude that the programme is not following their best interests. The practitioners' comments about the three children's refusal to participate connects with the fact of age (Arthur is 'too young to know the colours') and the fact they do not like messy activities (practitioner's report that Allan and Arthur are not keen on such activities). However, even if they are aware of the above factors involving age and interest, they try to stop children from their driving activity (thinking to eliminate the access to the bikes, or close the door in the morning) thus appearing to underestimate what the children are doing during their game with bikes and wheelbarrows, also losing at the same time the point that the child noticed something green in the other part of the garden but the spatial restrictions do not let them to go and experience it in their own way.

A further point arises from this episode, related again to how the programme is designed and to what extent a child's point of view is taken into consideration, raising a number of issues regarding reflective pedagogy and documentation. The practitioners design the programme based on their own experience (for instance the face painting is based on practitioners' previous experience with other children) or the green colour is based on observation (Jimmy's comments the previous week) and on practitioners' experience during February when they had introduced the red colour in the same way to the children. It seems from the way practitioners apply the programme that it is not designed in the here and now situation when it is imperative to act without any delay. The case of England has shown many paradigms related to 'teaching in the moment'. The practitioners did not take into consideration that Jimmy's comments were related to Jimmy's point of view and not with the rest group of children. The programme for several days was focused on painting, while for Allan, Ian and Arthur painting activities are not part of their interests. Although Ian and Arthur had pointed out that the grass is green it seems from the organised areas that the majority of the activities are based on painting, leaving aside from the programme the interest of those children that are not keen on being messy or 'there are too young to know the colours' (practitioner's comments on the field notes). Under these circumstances the practitioner's comments that Ian and Allan never participated in anything messy is preserved as a fact but without any further design for them thus excluding them from the programme.

### The case of Ian: 'My bike', the car and the wheels - extending and transferring

This section will focus in more depth on the case of Ian to show how the child follows his interest about wheeled toys, thus extending the programme and his learning. The aim here is to show how the child in more than 5 months following his own interests about wheels extended his learning, avoiding participation in the planned activities and defining his own goals and aims. Adult's support of his activities will be explored, while a question of whether or not practitioners should intervene in child's activities will be examined.

Ian manages to extend his interest in the cars and the wheels by trying different materials in different equipment. In this way the programme gives him many options to try, to experiment and to learn by making mistakes or following his own way. The whole process takes time and, as it is obvious from the chronological order of the events, it is easy to understand that there is a continuity of the events starting from a simple small car which was part of the activity to the bigger items (bikes, wooden and metallic) testing them in real situations of sand piles and soil. The events will be presented in chronological order (see table 4.10) to show how his interest in the cars and wheels has been involved in the planned activities, determining his participation, or not. In the first event that took place on the 14<sup>th</sup> April Ian is involved in the planned programme and asks me to video film him playing with the car (Appendix B.4.4 §15):

Table 4.10 Mosaic of the Events 'Ian and Wheels'				
14 <sup>th</sup> April, 'Rolling the blue car' MOVO2907 video data)	15 <sup>th</sup> April, 'Cartoon – Car' MOVO29 16 video data	15AE 'the cartoon car' field notes		
17 <sup>th</sup> of April 'flour and car' MOVO2940	24 <sup>th</sup> of April 'the white van' MOVO3012	24AEMOVO3014 'the car and the corn flour'	24 <sup>th</sup> April 'The car in the sticky corn flour' MOVO3015)	
13MEMOVO3610-12 'with the bike on the tree-with the wheelbarrow on the tree'	2JEMOVO3885 'the wheel on the sand pile'	24JMOVO4687 'with the bike on the sandpile'	'With the scooter on the sand pile'	

'We need a hammer' fieldnotes (Ian's comments)	15 <sup>th</sup> of July 'I've done it' MOVO4961-62, video data	'The bike!', building blocks
Practitioners Carolines comments, practitioner's Martha		

In the second event Ian found the cartoon and he transferred to a car going around and watching what the other children are doing in the different areas (the cartoon was part of the planning) (Appendix B.4.4§16). In the event on 17<sup>th</sup> April ('*Flour and car*' MOVO2940) Ian invited me to take a video of him playing with the flour and wooden car. Ian is moving the car in the flour leaving traces and checking the shape the wheels are leaving on the flour. This is messy activity and at the end of the video Ian was covering flour. On the 24<sup>th</sup> April ('*The white van*' MOVO3012, and 24<sup>th</sup> April '*The car in the sticky corn flour*' MOVO3015) Ian's decision to participate in a messy activity was activated after realising that he can use the car in the corn flour. In the event of 17<sup>th</sup> April from Jennifer that there is a possibility to use a car in the mixture, going against the previous effort of a practitioner to prevent them from putting items in the tray (Appendix B.4.4§17).

In the above event it is clear how the present moments as non-verbal lived story determined Ian's intention to participate in an activity that is messy. It is also clear how the priming event (being aware of the practitioner's prevention of Jennifer putting the white van in the tray) how Ian places first the plastic cars that a friend has done already (so has been accepted by practitioner) and keep the metallic white van for the end being sure about practitioner's permission. The practitioner, although initially prevent Jennifer from placing cars on the cornflour, finally became more flexible with the rule (Corsaro, 2003) seeing children's continuous effort to place the car into the mixture. In the fourth event (Appendix B.4.4§18) 13<sup>th</sup> May '*Sitting on the small bike*' MOVO3610 - MOVO3612, in the outside area Ian transferred the experience of the car stuck in the play dough to the stuck bike in the soil while from the video it is also clear that Allan's intention was to drive his wheelbarrow around the tree instead on the ground. In the video above I thought that the child was stuck and I asked Ian if he would like any help to remove his bike from the soil but straight away Ian said 'No!' In the fifth example Ian has transferred the experience in the sand using the wheel initially as the bikes were not permitted.



On 2<sup>nd</sup> June ('Wheel' MOVO3885 video) Ian has been observed to use the wheel leaving traces on the sand pile trying a different kind of wheel in a different material -the sand. In the next event Ian's intention is to transfer the bike into the sand, but he is not sure whether it is still permitted or not as on another day he watched the practitioner preventing some children from doing it (Appendix B.4.4§19). In the following event (14<sup>th</sup> July 'Bikes in sand pile' Field Notes) Ian is trying out the scooter. A few minutes later he pushes the bikes into the sand tray with Ben (Appendix B.4.4§20). They wanted me to help them pull the bike with their hands all together so as to remove it from the sand pile as it would happen if a track had been used. In the next event, it becomes clearer how the child tries to create a problem solving situation when he plays with his bike.

***'I've done it!'***

*Ian is riding his bike and is trying to pass through the climbing operator pieces. He presses the pedals, he looks back and he moves his body trying to force the bike to move. The bike is stuck. He tries again, pushing. 'Mmmmmmm!' He moves his legs from the pedals and he places them on the ground trying to push more. He pushes his bike back. He pushes again to the front 'Mmmmmmmmm! (1:01) 'Aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa aaaaaaaaaaaaaah!' he pushes more. 'I cannnnt!!!! I cannnnt!!' he says and he moves his body energetically on the bike. I stop the video, thinking I should go and help him. 'Do you need any help Ian?' I ask him 'You have stuck, do you want me to help you?' 'No!' he tells me. 'Take a photo!' he says. I was surprised as I was sure that he needed help. I take a video of him. He pushes the blue board with the front wheel of the bike. He keeps pushing and he moves it. He looks back trying to free the back wheel that it is stuck on the other part of the climbing operator. He is riding pushing with his bike and his feet the operators to make the moving easier 'I've done it!! I've done it!!' Ian says to me. (00:05) and he smiles. 'I have done it!! I have done it I have done it!!!!' he repeats with excitement and he keeps riding his bike easier now*

(15<sup>th</sup> July 'I've done it' MOVO4961-62, video data)

Ian's interest in wheels, cars, trains and bikes has determined his intention to participate or not in an activity. In addition to the above video data, on the 20<sup>th</sup> May Ian came by himself and asked me for a picture with the bike he made with the building blocks:

***‘Look!! Look my bicycle! Picture!’***

*Ibrahim is coming ‘Look!! Look my bicycle!’. ‘Picture!’ I am about to give him the digital blue camera but he says to me ‘Nooooo yours’. He goes and sits at the big table posing. And he said ‘picture’. Then he goes over to the carpet and he places the bicycle on his legs. He looks at the screen and he presses the button and takes a picture. I turn the camera to the preview function. ‘My bike’ he says. His mum is coming. ‘We will show her the bike’. ‘What colour is your bike?’ his mum asks him. ‘Red’ he says, laughing.*

(20<sup>th</sup> May ‘Look!! Look my bicycle! Picture!’ Field Notes)

**Analysis**

In the above cases with the bike Arthur and Ian (also including Allan) have accommodated their pre-existing experience with their bikes and scooters to a different level. Arthur has transferred the experience from home (where he plays alone) to the day care centre, interacting with more than one child. Ian’s case seems to be interesting in the matter of how he accommodates his previous knowledge as this has been stemmed from his interests in cars, wheels, trains and aeroplanes. Arthur’s case has got a more exploring context. MacNaughton (2004) asserts that the power of expectation plays a significant role in applied activities. Cameron (2007) found that for English practitioners the meaning of choice and independence are valuable terms. Hence it seems by the comments of practitioner Caroline and Arthur’s mother (see Appendix, B.4.4§1 and 3) that it is privilege value for them the child to have the choice to make a decision in which activity wants to be engaged. However, it seems that the important element is the child being able to make a ‘responsible’ choice. Playing everyday with the bike while the planned programme is applied has been viewed by practitioners as an indication that the child is not making different choices but repeating the same activity (see Appendix B.4.4§21) as for practitioners choice also means ‘creativity’ (Cameron, 2007). However, Carolines’s perspectives are in contrast with the findings of Cameron (2007:475) who found that some English practitioners see creativity and choice as ‘unrestricted access to resources’ and as such a vital for child’s ‘self-expression’. In the Early Years setting there was a plethora of resources (in contrast with the Greek case) which some times if a child wanted to find a particular toy that he was playing the previous day, it was not easily for them to find it (observation findings, Ian’s comments and pictures 9<sup>th</sup> June ‘The keys?’ , Field Notes) or like in the case of Arthur many toys were spread everywhere putting obstacles on his bike play.

Cameron (2007) argues that practitioner's aspects about the availability of the recourses are interrelated with the principles of the curriculum which see them as creators of an environment offering chances of opportunities. However as Cameron states, learning and creativity in this way is not perceived as something that can happen spontaneously and together but is designed for the child who has to come and get involved. As Cameron (2007) found English practitioners emphasise the meaning of choice as an indicator of independence and decision making but they did not make any comment on the child's initiatives activities or working as co-constructors as reflection of the curriculum principles. The English practitioner in this specific centre argues that providing children with a plethora of resources distract them for focusing on the planned activities. Additionally the bike activity has been omitted from the observation because '*they are always there*' (practitioner Caroline interview). Furthermore practitioner Caroline mentions an issue of co-operation with the family (Appendix, B.4.4§22).

Practitioners have got different aims and expectations while the child and his family have different values (Brooker, 2002). The question that comes up is why the children (Ian, Arthur and Allan) are unwilling to participate? Here two topics are coming up. Firstly what practitioner Caroline names as '*good boundaries at home*'. For her point of view Arthur comes from a family that offers such an environment while for Ian, she expresses some concerns. The above interview quotation is giving an explanation of the small length of the English interviews with the parents. It seems that practitioners have the same experience as me when they were doing the consultation with parents. Payler (2007: 238-239) discusses the importance of the 'pedagogic sub-cultures':

'guided and constraining factors that helped to mould the types of learning environments staff created included staff beliefs, staff training, wider reference groups of staff, extremely imposed government restraints or requirements, and the specific history, ethos and circumstances of the settings including resources'.

The 'pedagogy of sub-culture' is related also with the beliefs and the expectations not only of the staff (Miller, 2008) but also of the parents and the interaction that takes place between them. For instance, for Arthur's mother the role of the EY setting is related with child's opportunities to make friends and interact with other children because he is an only child (mother's interview). Additionally the fact that he choose to play with the no pedal bike is an achievement for her as Arthur starts walking relatively late compared to other children of the same age (mother's interview). Additionally exploring is significantly

important. Practitioner Caroline poses similarities and continuity between what the Arthur experiences at home and playgroup. Hence here practitioner and mother seems to share the same beliefs (practitioner and mother's interview) as child's socialisation and exploring is more important than the acquisition of cognitive skills due to his age (mother and practitioners interview). Additionally for Arthur, practitioner Caroline states that the child can have similar experience at home (Appendix, B.4.4§23).

However, for the case of Ian the things are different. In September he has to move from the playgroup to the reception class and the expectations there are different (practitioner Carla's comments, Field Notes). His mother's interview and daily interaction shows that she emphasised the cognitive outcomes (see for instance the last event at the 20<sup>th</sup> May where she asked Ian about the colour of his bike). Many times Ian was personally invited by a practitioner to sit and make a craft but he continually declined. Additionally, the writing table is always organised by practitioners on a daily basis, despite the fact that none of the children participated in it. On the other hand, his mother insists on the importance of crafting activities for Ian's cognitive skills (Field Notes and interview). According to practitioner Caroline, Ian's experience at home is different from what the setting is offering to him. For instance Ian's mother discourages messy activities at home (interview with mother and key worker), while practitioners organised many messy activities on an every day basis to encourage exploration.

Here the practitioners are more concerned about Ian and Allan because they are older and the expectations of the reception class will be different than the playgroup (Payler, 2007; Flewitt, 2005b). Hence the practitioners do not share with the child and his mother the same principles of learning. However, it should be mentioned that there is much video data that shows Ian's involvement in messy activities (such as MOVO3902 video 3<sup>rd</sup> June). In one of these, for instance on 9<sup>th</sup> June (MOVO4228), Ian invited me to video him. After playing for one minute he indicated me to stop filming and play with him in the water tray. This video data shows that Ian's refusal to be involved in the activity may be interrelated with practitioner's own understanding (Miller, 2008) of his learning and pedagogy in association with the personal beliefs about each child (Payler, 2007). For instance Arthur is younger, with very good development of spoken language while Ian and Allan are older but without 'adequate language development' (Practitioner' Caroline interview).

The above understanding may lead to a second concern associated with the way practitioners interact with the children. Jordan (2004) argues that it is easy for practitioners

to be unaware of the value of children's perceptions, 'if a teacher does not have the interactive skills to engage with children's understanding, or is unaware of the value of children's learning in doing so, then s/he is unlikely to be empowering children' (Jordan, 2004: 34). In all the above examples with the wheeled toys practitioners appear to view learning as a scaffolding process- the most expert (adult) guides the novice (child) in the learning and participation. It is a process where the child is coming to an already designed activity waiting to make changes and extend it. Here is the difference between the scaffolding and guided participation (see Chapter 2). From the practitioner's point of view it is the child that has to come to be involved in the activity following the objectives of the programme based on the pre-existing knowledge (the previous days planning). Hence, a practitioner observing children's interest in the bikes and cars incorporates that interest in her design, for instance painting.

*But I suppose OK I have put transport in with the trains and the cars and different things like that so I suppose I have a part of his planning into my planning because of cooperating the trains and the cars and things like that*

*(Practitioner Caroline, interview).*

However, the practitioner does not consider the child's preferences and values to get engaged in an activity that has been initiated by him – the bike in here and now situation. She does not associate the child's learning with the meaning of emerging learning in the present moment. In the above example the practitioner does not consider embellishing the curriculum with the wheeled toys and to share the experience with the children but, based on the observation, she extends the activity into something else expecting the children to come and join in. Payler (2007) argues that an adult has to consider the opportunities for interaction that the children are given. She names 'interactive space' (Payler, 2007: 250) as 'the opportunities - both verbal and non verbal- that are made available by each participant for each participant to contribute during interaction'. In this space the child sometimes takes the initiative to change the space, as in the case with the bikes. Especially in the case of Ian, who was attending a playgroup almost every day, it seemed that he extended his learning outside of the practitioners' space.

Moss (2008: 227) states that in the English context the meaning of EYEC is based on notion of 'preparing the child for the school' with practitioner's being understood as technicians (see Chapter 2). In 'The Planning for Children's Interests' what is highlighted as the key elements that practitioners have to seek in the planning is the elements of the

EYFS: a competent child, literacy, communication, healthy child etc (EYFS, 2007). As Moss (2006) argues, practitioners in England have been seen as supporters and contributors to the general economic and social objectives. He states that the image of technician is not reflected only on the early years practitioners but also to the teacher's role, although there are considerable differences in the payment and status. This image of the technician also influences the meaning of pedagogy and how it is understood by practitioners. For instance, the word pedagogy has not been used at all by practitioners. This is in contrast with the Greek case. The Greek practitioners used the word 'teaching' (διδάσκω=didactic) many times when they were describing their programme, while many official documents (FEK) use the term 'pedagogue'. Additionally many parents and children were calling them 'teachers'.

In contrast, in the English case the dominant word is 'key worker' or practitioner. This meaning has been challenged (see Chapter 2). Here Moss (2006) argues that the understanding of those who are working in the settings as technicians also influences the beliefs about pedagogy and their role in association with education, upbringing and care:

'The work of technician is also inscribed with certain values. Certainty, through outcomes that are known and measurable and prescribed methods to achieve them, is important, as is objectivity –a belief in the possibility of applied processes in a detached and replicable way that excludes personal interpretation and feelings'

(Moss, 2006: 35).

Looking at the case of Ian who progressively challenged his skills with the bike (similar to Allan) Corsaro (2005a: 139) found that toddlers in the creation of their routines (such as with the bike and wheelbarrows in the present study) challenge their skills at the end of the academic year by doing modifications to their initial routine and making it more difficult. Although in Corsaro's case the practitioners were concerned about safety issues, when they saw how the children enjoyed the activity they did not ban it. For instance, initially on the wheeling round of the tree many children were playing with bikes and trolleys while Ian was sitting on the bike. Practitioner concerning about their safety is asking children to get off. Ian refuses to move his bike while Allan more careful now is asking me to give a hand every time he is feeling being in danger. As a result the children gradually shared the adults' concerns and became aware of the safety issues (see Allan and Ian in the tree) and became more careful in the way they constructed their innovations. Additionally, in the

case of an accident the children were comforting each other without asking for the adult's contribution.

Thus Corsaro found that the child's initiated routine helps them to gain control over teachers and the physical environment. In all the above cases Ian has been initially discouraged, for example, to place toys in the play dough, the bike, the tree or sand pile. Drawing on Corsaro (2005a), it can clearly be seen that in the case of Ian there is progressively a notion of the wheeled toys that shows the child is learning by exploring the traces the wheels make under different conditions in different materials. However, adult involvement is missing in all these episodes. The practitioners do not appear to have considered the meaning the bike-wheel may have for children's learning. In particular for Ian, as it is an important part of his learning, because it is the same every day. As Corsaro (2005a) states, through these routines children recycle the same element (the wheel or the bike), then based on the same element they end or start the participation respectively changing or extending it through time. This element has been challenged by practitioners viewing the wheeled toys as a routine that does not change, 'it is always the same' (Practitioner Caroline's comments - Field Notes). Significantly, as Corsaro (2005a) points out, adults and children have different perspectives on the utilisation of an activity.

The practitioners appear more concerned about the cognitive part of the activity –learning (the green colour) (Corsaro, 2005a; Rogoff, 1990), while on the other hand the children enjoy the here and now situation of the activity. The previous section relating to Ian and the traffic sign clarifies how finally the child through all these events compromises his interests in his learning activities. The events are problematic in the matter of the sharing of meaning; the child is not sharing his experience with anybody else; the practitioner is far away from what the child is doing, thus demonstrating how not sharing the experience with the child creates limitations in participation (Jordan, 2004). For instance, the present section shows how the two boys Ian and Allan (Arthur has been not counted by the practitioners due to his age) have been gradually excluded from the organised activities simply because they chose not to engage in painting and messy activities in the setting.

Rogoff (1990: 7) declares that children are 'apprentices in thinking, active in their efforts to learn from observing and participating with peers and more skilled members of the society' and indeed in all the aforementioned cases with Ian, Allan and Arthur it is clear how the three boys extend and advance their learning by riding the bike 'Jump on it', 'Stop', 'Go', 'Stop', 'Go'. However, participation in the planned programme is missing

and the practitioners have expressed concern about the children's learning. Rogoff (1990: 8) states that in the process of 'apprentices in thinking' both the participation and guidance are crucial. She uses the term 'guided participation' to highlight the collaborative notion as it emerges through the intersubjectivity between the partners in sharing understanding. Clearly in the above events there is very limited sharing of understanding, intersubjectivity and participation. The paradox is embedded not in the fact that the child is bored but in the fact that the child ignores the adult's planning and the adult ignores the child's actions on the planning. The practitioners, being aware of the children's refusal to participate in the planned activities, try to catch child's attention by eliminating access (closing doors, reducing available resources, etc) while the children wait until the time to access the outside area comes.

From the way the activities are organised it appears that there is no clear goal (Rogoff, 1990) while the children and the adults do not share the responsibility of doing something together. Looking through the above cases the main task and goal of each activity is missed. For instance, a practitioner's call 'let's find something green' is a subdivided task (Rogoff, 1990) without the children being aware of the activity as a whole. Conversely, looking at the child initiated activities there is clear understanding of their task. For example, Arthur with his bike is in a continual journey to explore new things, travelling with his bike in the same way he used to explore in the park or in the garden of his house (practitioner Caroline and mother confirm - interviews). For Ian and Allan, through their use of the wheeled toys, challenge and advance their skills to gain control and independence (Corsaro, 2005a). Allan in the beginning of the research was accident prone with the wheelbarrow, but he gradually become a scooter rider advancing his skills riding the scooter in the whole area of the garden (similar results have also been found with Jennifer and Stefanie). Ian's example is clearer in relation to the aims and the goals he has in mind. It starts with testing the wheels of the car in the paint to transfer the experience to the soil, the bike and finally to his attitude for driving in traffic. While from the event with the grass and the building blocks Ian has clearly gained knowledge of what colour his bike and the grass are!

In the English case, the programme has been challenged by the children themselves, not only when the children decide to play with the bikes, wheelbarrows and scooters instead of being involved in the planned activities, but also during the time the children are willing to become involved in a particular activity. For example, Stefanie who is interested in painting and doing crafts, has been observed going to the main area of painting or crafting



activity every day, taking the brush or the spatula to spread the colour or the glue on the paper respectively. However, her action stops with spreading as there is no adult to interact and help to extend her skill. With practitioners (practitioner Anna and Martha) it has been argued that the child has not extended the activity at all, but only repeats the same pattern waiting for almost 10 minutes for someone to support her (Stefanie is always inviting me to join her in the painting activities). As with Stefanie, it has been found that although Arthur is joining the sandwich making activity, he is not really focusing on it (Appendix, B.4.4.§24). Similar to the above event with the sandwich, Arthur on 8<sup>th</sup> July, after having played for 10 minutes outside with the bike, went into the room and sat at the main table ready to get involved in the activity with the play dough and the stencils, but the staff member who is sitting by him did not become involved. The use of the verb ‘try’ here is important as Arthur after trying for a couple of seconds to press the stencil into the dough, struggling a bit, finally gave up and went and sat on the carpet without doing anything.

Additionally, it has been found that during the cooking activity the children are being invited by an adult to contribute to a subdivided task, such as putting icing sugar and chocolate drops on the top of the biscuits and not contributing to the activity as a whole. However, during the children’s initiated play it has been found that they repeat real cooking patterns. For example, in the case of Stefanie and Jennifer, they use a whisk and rollers as if they whisk eggs and make the dough ready for cakes and cooking. Practitioner Jacky viewing the videos of Stefanie, Arthur and Ian during the craft time, cooking time and bike respectively (Appendix, B.4.4§25) mentions that it is the staff that has not grasped the given opportunities.

Rogoff, (1990) argues that ‘guided participation’ and symmetrical responsibility are important elements in working together learning. The child comes to join the activity (or has a look whilst sitting on the bike or scooter) but the practitioner does not encouraging them further. This short overview between the adult organized and child initiated activities shows that Ian’s, Arthur’s and Allan’s preferences for the bike was not due to ignorance but to the lack of effective engagement by the practitioners. In all these cases the child takes the initiative but the adult is not willing to share it. Looking at the Early Years Foundation Stage (DfES, 2007), observation and reflection on child’s play is highlighted as one of the basic principles. In addition to this the face to face interaction and planning according to child’s needs is crucial for child’s learning while the ‘personalized learning’ is positioned (DfES, 2007:6) as significantly important for children’s good starting school life . Both the Early Years Foundation Stage and the regulation of this Sure Start centre (as

documented on the 'Planning for Children's Interests' sheets) are guided by the discourse of the child's best interest. In the notion of a community of learners, as defined by Rogoff et al. (2001), children's best interest is 'Principle-in-Action' (Bartlett et al., 2001: 33) 'learning activities are planned by children as well adults, and adults learn from their own involvement as they foster children's learning. Children are natural learners as long as they can deeply involve in activities which they help to devise and for which they see a purpose – 'minds-on' activities' (Bartlett et al., 2001: 33). Children in the community of learners are not learning only cognitive skills but also to make responsible choices and solve problems. In all the above events the three boys show their responsibility towards their decisions and the problem solving situation. Bartlett et al. (2001: 33) states that in a flexible curriculum an adult, sharing the same activity with the child must be open in a 'serendipitous learning moment' as it arises through the exchange of the ideas. Falk and Darling-Hammond (2010) argue that documentation based preliminary on observation (like in the English case) is a way to compromise what the child knows with the practitioner's knowledge and the goals and objectivities of the curriculum. The documentation can work as such when the practitioner observes the child, gaining knowledge about her priorities and then create a curriculum that extends understanding together with the child (Falk and Darling-Hammond, 2010).

Centralizing the planning around a child's best interest means that the adult's responsibility is to help the child to find a way of acting and interacting so that 'their interest comes into their choices of what to do and how to do it, and their interest expands as they become fascinated by the adult's and other children's interests' (Bartlett et al., 2001:43). For instance, Ian's example with the white van and the messy play dough shows how the child observing the rest of the group is initially not interested but afterwards, being fascinated by Jennifer's idea to place the white van into the play dough, he becomes involved. Ian experiences the 'sticky material' through the car while Jennifer and the rest of the group do it through using their hands, as the adult indicated to them. Here the practitioner needs to understand the diverse ways that children can understand the same activity (Falk and Darling-Hammond, 2010). However, in the '*Planning of the Children's Interests*' Ian's achievement is not reported but Jennifer's response, acting according to adult expectations (and verbally expressive) was reported. Thus observation as a means for documentation in pedagogical way of working is challenged. The child – Ian has not been rewarded at all through the whole process, despite the fact that practitioner knows as a fact that 'Ian does not like messy activities' while 'Jennifer enjoys the messy activities'. This becomes a self-perpetuating process. Bartlett et al. (2001:45) state that in flexible programmes (like the

EYFS) in the setting, in order to capture the goals and the principles of the curriculum it is very important that ‘activities with multiple entry points’ are applied. Hedges and Cullen (2005), however, found that practitioners are more orientated towards of acquisition of skills meeting the principles of the curriculum and that they meet the challenges in the construction of learning through spontaneous and unpredictable teaching moments. The practitioners in the English centre seem to be somewhat confused about how to meet the interests of the children and this is revealed when they viewed the videos and reflect on their pedagogy.

Turkanis (2001) asserts that young people are keen learners by nature and able to involve at any time in the learning process. In this process a child can be encouraged by peers and adults, comprehending parallel desires and interests. Turkanis argues that in creating a curriculum with children based on their experience, the principle of togetherness is crucial (see Chapter 2). The role of adult is important to measure when the right moment arises therefore building up the process in the group leading to the emergence of ideas. This is called ‘seizing the moment’ or ‘teaching to the moment’ (Turkanis, 2001: 92) and as she states the ‘curriculum is all around, just waiting to happen’.

In the above examples and the events that are discussed in the previous section it is clear that the practitioners do not always afford children the opportunity to pursue the right moment to grasp the many opportunities that emerge through the curriculum. For instance, referring to the cases of Jennifer and Ian in the previous section, these are strong examples to support that argument. Additionally, in the present section the example of ‘I am doing something green’ in the way that has been integrated in the whole program is being challenged by Ian and Arthur who clearly know the green grass but for them it is not the right moment as they now have ‘their own agenda’ (Turkanis, 2001: 94).

Recognizing that children have their own personal agenda is another crucial principle that Turkanis outlines within a community of learners. She states that children since they arrive at school already have their personal aims and goals in the same way the curriculum, the educational institutions and families have. Respecting and developing the curriculum following this principle helps in “optimizing” their interests and motivations. In all the above examples the children have clearly demonstrated their agenda.

The examples of Ian with the traffic lights, Jennifer and the twister (previous Section), Arthur and the weather cones, play with wheeled toys, the episode with the colour green in

connection with children's comments show that practitioners have not allowed children to use many of the recourses to comprehend and embrace the planned adult activities. Turkanis (2001) concludes that when children understand their role in the design of the curriculum as creators they are more likely to be responsible participants at all the time. The above adult planned activities lack what Turkanis et al. (2001: 226) describe as 'purposeful' learning. Children need to know the reason for the activity and the connection with their real life. Therefore in all the above cases children continuously decline to engage in practitioner's calls and follow their own agenda, exercising agency through the whole adult's planning.

Here there are some implications for the way that observation takes place and is used as documentation. In the setting observation is used as a tool to assess the child's progress and design the next planning. The observation is recorded either by writing on small cards or video filming. Every week the focus is on a particular theme and then the key worker arranges a meeting with the parents to discuss the child's progress. As such the sharing of meaning is constructed with the practitioner and parent without the child's comments. Such an assessment of the individual progression has been found problematic by Vallberg Roth and Månsson (2009) who argue that as long as a child is part of a culture – the setting, her self-understanding must be seen as part of intersubjectivity and shared meaning with practitioners, parents and the child otherwise there is a danger of constructing an identity based on the notion of reaching specific goals leading to normalizing attitudes.

#### *4.4.3 What happens when the children play outside? (When adults misunderstand children's intention to do things)*

The findings of this part are exclusively based on children's initiatives. For this reason it will become evident that the data has a different context as it is based on children's stories, giving a brief overview of their cultural world. It is worthwhile to mention that children's stories are not correlated with the adult designed programme. What is the main finding is that what is in the centre of child's interest is not relevant either with the initial design of this study nor with the adult's planned activities, underlining in this way the possibility for children to have their own individual aims and goals while at the same time children as competent actors highlight thematically the topics of this study.

It has been established that children are more spontaneous in talking and showing to me issues related with the nature and the outside area. In all cases the child has invited me

showing in this way the child's willingness to speak about the outdoor area. Therefore, the children's comments and actions provoked my attention. The children have been observed being more talkative and active in the garden rather than in the classroom. Many of children's pictures are related with activities and events that are taking place in the outside area rather than in the classroom. The "walking with video" process is related only with the outside activities and not with the activities taking place inside. Additionally, using the routines cards to capture children's perspectives reveals children's desire to spend more time outside rather than in the classroom. This study has found that in both cases of England and Greece children are keen on talking about issues related to the outside world and take the initiative (Tovey, 2007) to invite me on their trip and activities many times (Rogoff, 1990). The child-initiated tours are related with this topic while children's narratives capture their stories showing that under-threes have their own understanding of their world. However, it has been found that children's intention to talk and experience nature and the phenomena which are taking place out of the classroom are often restricted, due to spatial obstacles such as the fence, doors and windows and adult intervention.

### *The fence and the curriculum*

Previously a short overview of how the fence restricts children's activities has been described through the case of Arthur and Ian. In this section children's strategies towards the spatial arrangement correlated with the children's activities will be examined. It has been observed since the beginning of the study that children were trying to make up situations to make the practitioners open the door of the fence by throwing toys beyond the fence and thus forcing a practitioner to go and open the door to collect them (21<sup>st</sup> February, Field Notes, Ian and Cindy). The fence has been found in many children's photographs, while in some cases it appears to create feelings of insecurity and make children upset, at other times it restricts children from extending their programme. For example, there were two events (one with Ian and one with Arthur) which cause some concern about the children's well being. The children's effort to access this area has been depicted as climbing on the bike in order to have better overview or asking me to open the door or pick them up.

The fence is part of Ian's picture on 15<sup>th</sup> April as well. Through those pictures Ian reports all the main topics that later on centralise the analysis of the themes important for him (the bike, the fence and younger children). The next step was for me to check to what extent these initial pictures reflect exactly Ian's developing picture of the curriculum and the day care centre. It seems for the next events that for Ian the fence is related with issues of

safety and accessing particular areas. Although many times they have stepped on the bikes trying to see what is beyond the fence, there are events that stand out highlighting the extent to which the fence makes the child feel secure. For instance, an event took place on the 16<sup>th</sup> June when Ian was playing with the sand pile on the boat (Appendix, B.4.4, §26). The event shows that for Ian the closed door makes him feel unsafe and also appears to affect his well being. Similar with Ian, Arthur was involved in an event where another younger child was kicking the fence with his foot in another part of the garden. The event took place on the 24<sup>th</sup> June (Appendix, B.4.4, §27) and Arthur seems to be attracted by the Connected Four game that was on the other part of the fence, ‘*Can we have a look!?*’ is asking me many times. I could not take the initiative to open the door and so I told him to go and take permission. Although Arthur starts riding his bike but not seeing any of the practitioners around he goes back and wonders where Tommy is. Tommy has now gone to the other part of the garden having found the other door of the fence:

*(2:11) ‘Are you alright?’ he asks Tommy. Tommy is standing up with one hand touching the fence. ‘Tommy ...look again then!’ he says to him and he leaves riding his bike. (2:30) He stops at the wooden step and has a look around.*

*(24<sup>th</sup> June ‘Are you alright?’ MOVO4700, video data )*

I go to report the event to a practitioner and to my surprise Arthur follows me:

*I found Caroline and I told her that children wanted to play with the connected four game. ‘I am not sure if we could have it!’ Caroline says to me. I notice then that Arthur was next to me listening ‘What did she tell you?’ he asks me ‘That she is not sure if we could have it!’ ‘Ahhh... ok then!’ he says . He then picks up the wheelbarrow and moves towards the sand pile.*

*(24<sup>th</sup> June Field Notes)*

Arthur was waiting for the final answer of whether or not accessing the gate is permitted. From his comments it seems that the Connected Four toy was in his attention and he wanted to have a try. He did not make any comment about the practitioner’s answer. On the other hand it is not clear if Tommy wanted to see the same toy or not. Initially viewing the video I and the practitioner had the same impression. However, the practitioner pointed out that due to the fact that Tommy has only recently started attending this group and did not attend often his perspective may not be clear. Actually, without his comments or other adults’ information the practitioner is not able to understand what exactly Tommy had in

his mind. Looking at Arthur's case, clearly he mentions to me his desire to go to the other part of the fence to have a look at the Connected Four game. Here it is missing what exactly the child had on his mind to do once he would have access there. In this way the programme seems to have spatial restriction that eliminate children's goals and objectives related with their own planning, as the above events were not part of the planned activities. Similar to Arthur, in another case with Jennifer it has been found that the fence often restricts children's access to playing with particular toys:

**'The skimmer and the fence'**

*Jennifer asked for the digital blue camera. She moves close to the fence and she is trying to see something. She takes some pictures 'Look Angeliki!' she says to me. She steps on the top of the green horse next to the fence watching the skimmer. 'I want it' she tells me and she takes a picture. ('Now what can I do?' I am thinking to myself as practitioner Betty is there and she is watching Jennifer climbing)(present moment). 'She wants the skimmer' I say to the practitioner 'Jennifer get down off the horse' the practitioner tells her. Jennifer does not pay attention to her. 'I will go to take the balloon soon', the practitioner says 'but you have to get down!'. However Jennifer does not getting down. She looks around and she takes some more pictures looking at what other children were doing at that moment 'Wow! I can see different from here!' she says. Then she stretches out her hand trying to reach the balloon. I see practitioner getting a bit upset over the fact that I did not make any comment to Jennifer. ('But... what could I say when the child is calling me to show me something?')(Present moment) I am thinking. ('What should I do?' I am still thinking) I was following with my eyes Jennifer to see what she is doing...and when Jennifer was not there any more I went and I took the horse and placed it a bit further from the fence in order that the children did not climb on it again.*

(22<sup>nd</sup> May, 'The skimmer and the fence' Field Notes)

The above event is being reported together with Jennifer's pictures and my comments as non-verbal lived stories. The child's intention was to take back the skimmer and play with that. The camera is becoming an active agent and using it as a means the child is showing what she wants – the skimmer. It seems that the fence is the obstacle that prevents the child from seeing things and accessing materials and determines however the way to act and react. It is not clear from Jennifer's comments what the fence is representing but it

seems that she was making an effort to capture an object that was in the other part of the garden. Following Lenz Taguchi's (2010: 63) argument that pedagogical documentation is a 'material discursive apparatus', which means that: 'the apparatus of pedagogical documentation is itself and active agent in generating discursive knowledge' I found myself puzzled. The practitioner on the other hand pays attention to *what* and not *why* the child is stepping on the horse, firstly confirming the adult rule and then answering the child's request, raising many questions about the meaning of 'see' and 'observe' (Lenz Taguchi, 2010: 70). I was also concerned that whilst I was informed of the children's desire to have access to all the outside areas, I was expected to adhere to the practitioners' rules and restrict access to the children, thus impacting on my relationship with the children.

Finally from the above event and the one that will be reported next, it seems that the fence prevents children from extending their own ideas. Children have been observed climbing on objects and looking over the fence only when the doors are closed creating many questions as to why the space should be so restricted when there is already a huge wall that protects the broader area. For instance, Ian (together with Jennifer) is fascinated about the new boat that will soon to be in the garden and he steps on the wheelbarrow to observe it. The garden was designed and built for the setting by a local Community Artist following consultation with families and staff. It was his idea for the boat but all the staff thought it was a 'great idea'. At the time they had plenty of money left from Sure Start Funding so the project met the full costs. Manager decided to have the shade sail and again she was given a budget from the project funds to pay for that.

### **'Looking at the boat'**

*Ian and Jennifer are stepping on the wheelbarrows looking beyond the fence, (00:05) Jennifer is leaving, while Ian is looking all around on the other side of the garden. The wheelbarrow is not stable and Ian slides, he looks at me complaining about the wheelbarrow. He takes it back to the fence. He reaches out and places his hands on my arms. I pick him up and we look at the boat through the camera for a while. Then he stops the video and he leaves. He goes on the climbing frame.*

(8<sup>th</sup> May 'the boat' Field Notes and video MOVO3368)

The above video is taken together with the child. The focus of his attention was the boat. Even if the wheelbarrow was not stable and made him fall down Ian did not give up and he



is trying to focus on his aim – to watch the boat. Concerning the safety issues, the child himself tries to solve the problem by grasping my hands (Corsaro, 2005a; 2009). Looking at the same time through the camera and directing my hand while he stopped the video when he does not want to continue anymore. The child does not make any further comments and therefore what he is thinking about viewing the boat it is not fully clear. Thus the developing picture of the curriculum is blurred without his comments. However, what is becoming evident is that the fence controls and restricts children's aims and goals and even if the child can not verbally express his thoughts the spatial restrictions do not let him show to the adult what exactly is in his intention (Stern, 2004). In another event similar to the above, Ian and Allan clarified the reason why they want to go to the other part of the garden - to play with the water. It was 13<sup>th</sup> May when the digger came to do some work on the boat. For the first time also this morning the workman put the sprinkler in the garden to water the grass. Ian came close to me, raising up his hands:

### **'The Boat'**

*Ian grasps my hand and he says 'The boat!' and he raises his hands on me. I pick him up in my arms and he takes two pictures, one with the builder and one without. He gets down while Allan comes by riding his scooter. Allan looks through the fence. He gets off his scooter and he stares at something. Allan comes into my arms, trying to tell me something. 'Blalalalaal....ahhhh ahhhha' raising up his hands. 'Do you want video or picture?' I ask him and he continues to indicate to me something close to the boat pointing at the same time my camera. 'Do you want to take a video?' 'Yeah, there?' he says, showing me the sprinkler.*

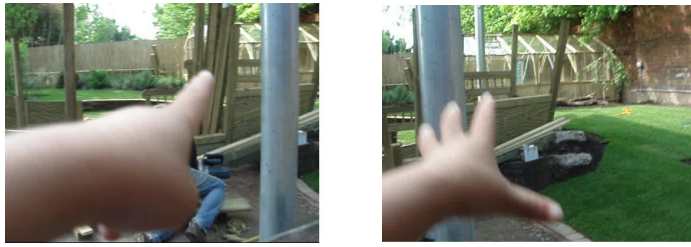
(13<sup>th</sup> May, 'The Boat' Field Notes)

The next video is taken with Allan and me together. I keep hold of the camera while the child is handling my hand directing the lens of the camera in his direction.

*Allan keeps my hand focusing initially on the builder that is working on the boat. 'Ahannah pitittitot' Allan says indicating the water sprinkler with his left hand. 'Yeah?' I say to him. 'There!' he answers me indicating the water sprinkler. 'Fss fsss fss.....there!' Allan says stretching his hand and trying to touch the sprinkler with his hand. 'Aaaaaaaaaaaaaahhhhh ,.....fsss ffsss fsssss !' I turn the camera towards the builder wanting to be sure about Allan's interest in the twister and Allan turns my hand to the sprinkler straight away. 'Up up up!!' Allan says 'Hey*

*mama!!!’ pointing to the sprinkler. ‘Fs fs fs!’ ‘It is the water!’ I say to him. ‘Hmhmh fsss fsss!’ Allan says trying to touch it. He stops the video.*

(13<sup>th</sup> May: Allan’s video of the water MOVO3609)



**Figure 4.4: Allan wants the water sprinkler (00:8 video still) and Figure 4.5: Allan trying to touch the water sprinkler (00: 10 video still)**

Allan leaves here and he picks up the scooter again. Most probably he realises that I am not entitled to give access to the area. Practitioner Caroline and Betty have been asked if they have used it another day and they said that this was the first day. When Allan’s mother has been asked if they have something similar at home she said no. She was thinking that probably during the bath Allan is using some animal toys throwing water and may he is fascinated because of that. However in this video it is interesting how Allan is trying to indicate to me where to film. Anytime that I move the camera towards the direction of the builder and he checks on the video that is not what he wants and he shows with his finger the water sprinkler doing the sound of ‘fsfsfsfsfsfsfsfsf....aaaaaaaah’ although the water is not there. Despite the information the above video provides in relation to the way the research with young children is taking place, it seems that again the fence creates many obstacles to children’s intention of exploring. Based on mothers’ and practitioners’ comments it seems that the water sprinkler is exclusively an object that the child had experienced for the first time in the setting. However, although the event has been reported straight away to the staff, the practitioners ignored children’s request, creating concern about the pedagogical way of ‘see’ and ‘observe’ (Lens Taguchi, 2010: 70) and the meaning the pedagogical documentation takes in programmes such as the EYFS in the setting.

### ***The wooden house and the curriculum***

The picture below is a construction that appears as a mushroom in the day care centre on the 16<sup>th</sup> June. Although the practitioners named it to me as ‘a bird’s house’, the events of the day show that for children it was a dog’s house, a ghost house and a place to find

spiders. I missed the chance to have an overview of how the whole event started. I was being invited on a trolley tour by Ian.



**Figure 4.6 : The wooden house in the garden (researcher's photos)**

However, from the other part of the garden Ian (during the tour) notices that many children were in the house including his friend John. When I arrived in the wooden house Jennifer grasped the digital blue camera and she took pictures of the new construction and invited me to follow her with the camera (walking with video). Jennifer took pictures of the house and the trees and for the first time she was willing to talk about her photos:

#### **Jennifer's Comments**

*Angeliki: This is the first picture you took*

*Jennifer: That's a dog's house, it hasn't been done yet! It falls from up there!*

*She tells me 'That's the dog ...is living here on the house...it shouldn't be there (she shows to me the other part of the garden where usually they put the dog,) 'dogs house is here!' She tells me.*

(16<sup>th</sup> June Field Notes)

The above field notes, in connection with Jennifer's pictures and comments, show the building picture that children develop about the new house that appears in the garden. The house appears as a mushroom, therefore for Jennifer it has fallen down from the tree. The dog's house becomes parts of the children's stories. What was really a surprise for me was the fact that Jennifer for a first time was willing to speak about her pictures. In fact it has been observed that most of the time she was talking to me about issues relating to the child initiated activities but she had never sat down before to explain her pictures to me. It has been found also that I have been invited out of the blue by many other children to have a look at the wooden house not only on the 16 June but even until the end of the visits in the day care centre. Surprisingly, those dogs since I start were always accessible to the children and placed in the area close to the babies' room, but did not feature in the children's play. Thus, based on Jennifer's argument, it seems that they were not in the right place. For example, Stefanie on the same day as Jennifer showed me her dog in the

wooden house and she asked for a picture. Then she played together with John 'counting to ten' and speaking about which dog is bigger, rewarding 'good boy' to each other for counting correctly to ten. Soon Ian came playing some music using a stick and the dog:

***'Playing music sitting on the dog'***

*Ian sits on the dog and he hits the stick on the dog's heads. Left –right left right left right again and again. It was about 11: 40 and a practitioner calls again for the children to come in. None of them seems to be interested. (I don't want to be in trouble- present moment) 'Shall we go in?!' I ask Ian and John. 'NOooooooooooooooooooooo!' they say to me.*

(16<sup>th</sup> June 'Playing music sitting on the dog' MOVO4570 video data)

This was the first story, the first day the dog's house appears in the setting. The data would be increased if I was not feeling concerned (present moment) about the fact that the announcement of coming inside was made twice. I left together with Stefanie leaving behind the two boys who continued saying 'Nooooo' (we are not coming). I just reported to the staff their desire and a member of staff went straight away to bring the boys in (this time the two boys did not say 'No' to the member of staff). However, from the above event it seems that many times the children's programme is interrupted by adults due to the structure of the curriculum. In fact the children were asked to come into the room not because it was time to go home but for them to sit down on the carpet to sing before their parents came to pick them up. The two children Ian and John clearly mentioned their desire not to follow the routine and they expressed that to me due to the different relationship. However, when a practitioner just called them from the door the two children gave up their game with the dogs and came into the room. Nonetheless, in the matter of the research's question about 'how the meaning of participation is perceived' in the setting many concerns arise. Firstly, the fact that the dogs instead of being placed inside or outside the wooden house were placed again in the usual area, disrespected children's transformation. While secondly the structure of the curriculum raises the question of why children should give up an activity that they enjoy in the name of a circle time, especially when the staff knows that it is not children's favourite activity?

Whilst, the above issues will be discussed further at the end of the chapter, it seems that the dog's house is the focus of the children's attention over the next few days. For Arthur it is a new place which needed to be explored 'look at that!' he says on his walking with video tour looking impressed all around the roof. However the event of 30<sup>th</sup> June in connection

with practitioner's comments shows that the stories around the house are changeable according to children's experience. It was after snack time when Cindy invited me to join her into the house to play.

*Cindy grasps my hand 'Come!' she says. And she goes over to the wooden house. 'What is here?' I ask her 'There is a monster!' she tells me 'Where!' 'There!' and she shows me the roof with the icon on the top. A car is passing outside and Cindy is quiet 'shoushhhh!' she tells me. When the noise of the car is gone Cindy says 'A car!' 'Yeah it was the car!' 'shoussssh!' Cindy says again trying to listen. From somewhere music was coming. Cindy is listening ...*

(30<sup>th</sup> June, 'The monster', Field Notes)

For Cindy in the wooden house there is a monster associated with the shape of the wood on the roof. It is also a place where it is possible to hear and recognise many noises giving to her the chance to hear sounds in a different way than being in the classroom or in the open space. In children's hidden spaces there are sounds which cannot be heard under different circumstances. The next video was taken just focusing on the nice feeling the sound of the music can give to those that had the chance to listening being in the 'dog's house'. The camera here is used more as an audio and not as a visual tool, as the richest part is the audio background of the video (see Appendix B.4.4§ 28). In the video (30<sup>th</sup> June 'the wooden house' MOVO4778-9) it is easy to understand the many stories the children made up to explain the appearance of the wooden house. For Cindy there is a monster correlated her point of view with the icons in the wood. For Jennifer, it is a house that is not ready yet, while for Ian there was a spider who has gone, bringing with him the cowslip soft toy from the babies room (cowslip is an insect). However, the practitioner never paid attention to the role the house can play in children's stories and only after the first interview was reported did they observe more intensively what children were doing in the dog's house. In the next interview the practitioner reported to me that even after two months the story is still taking place (see Appendix B.4.4§29). The practitioner's comments act as confirmation of what Jennifer and Cindy had reported to me during the summer. The aforementioned events took place in the autumn when children come back from holiday. From her comments it seems that children are still in the process of confirming the house as a dog's house, as from the above description the dogs were placed there again.

### **The Tree-The case of Jennifer**

Jennifer likes to see the things from a high position and as practitioner Martha said ‘She is an adventurous girl’. The story comes to my attention on the 13<sup>th</sup> March when Jennifer asks me to have a look on the roof because there is something there. This event is an indication of how the child asked me to follow her intents to share a common meaning. She wants to see what is on the roof and needed help for that asked for help in accessing it by raise her up. However, the relationship of trust is affected when I ask for a member of staff to explain one word Jennifer was telling me and I could not understand. When Jennifer saw me to ask for practitioner’s help left and refuse to interact more. It took almost one month for Jennifer to trust me again and build up a shared meaning. It was on 10<sup>th</sup> April, when Jennifer was riding a scooter, that she invited me to join her on her journey (Appendix, B.4.4§30). In the above events, which are based on the child’s initiative, the stimulus of the natural environment and the spatial arrangements offer the child a range of rich experiences such as the different shapes highlighted in the roof that sparked off the child’s curiosity (they are ants and balls), the different sensations the child can have from seeing the things up in the tree, collecting objects such as leaves and testing the gravity, seeing better and noticing the colour of the my eyes. Another finding is the use of the camera. Using the camera Jennifer can not only see people in a different way but can also bring the things closer to her. In both events of the 10<sup>th</sup> April and 22<sup>nd</sup> May (when she took a picture of the roof again) Jennifer uses the camera not only for saying what she wants but also to bring the items closer.

In the interview with practitioner Caroline she agrees that Jennifer is still keen on spending time being in the tree and confirms that even after the end of the project that Jennifer continues the same activities (see Appendix B.4.4§31). From Jennifer’s comments it seems that what she enjoys the most when she is climbing or seeing things from the tree or places that high up is the different experience of using her senses. For example, on the 16<sup>th</sup> June in the second part of her tour Jennifer took pictures of some other parts of the garden. Jennifer’s comments on her pictures were as follows:

#### **Jennifer’s Comments**

*Sitting on the wooden step, Jennifer and I are reviewing the pictures of the second part of the tour:*

*Angeliki: That’s the tree and the stairs*

*Jennifer: Yeah..... I want to go up there!*

*Angeliki: What are you thinking to do up there?*

*Jennifer: I can see different!!! and she looks at the sky*

*Angeliki: Different?*

*Jennifer: I can see everything from up there!*

*Angeliki: And this one?*

*Jennifer: It is the tunnel...nobody can see me*

*Angeliki: Nobody?*

*Jennifer: But I can hear better in there.*

(16<sup>th</sup> June Field Notes)

Jennifer's comments clearly show that the places that she specified as important for her life in the setting are relating with her senses, to see and to hear. Returning to the events of 10<sup>th</sup> April and 22<sup>nd</sup> May it is worthwhile highlighting some points in relation to the planned activities. Both of the cases are drawn to the adult's attention-both the researcher's and the practitioner's. Referring to Jordan's model of shared meaning, it is clear that I am sharing the meaning with the child but the practitioner is missing the why the child is climbing or stepping on the green horse or tree, focusing instead on what the child is doing. In the second event of 22<sup>nd</sup> May, being aware now of the rule (not to climb or step on objects) I am in the middle of the two parties trying to share the meaning with the both parties together. However, it seems that the practitioner (based on the practitioner's interview) when she sees Jennifer trying to climb on the tree again, recognises the child's needs to see the world from a different lens and the possible benefits the tree can give to the child for further learning. In this way the programme whether it is termed curriculum or framework it seems that in the first case the practitioners themselves failed to recognise the child's individual goals and interests, while in the second case (practitioner's comments) they are more child directed. Based on Jennifer's comments 'I can hear better' 'I can see different' sitting on the tree or stepping on the horse, or wanting to climb on the tree it appears that the child, after having spend almost one year being occupied with the organised activities, draws on natural resources and extends her interest into the real world (Rogoff's theory) moving beyond adult's expectations (Corsaro and Rogoff). Unfortunately from the above events the practitioner's intervention interrupts the child's experience of learning through feeling the natural environment diminishing in this way the experience only to the organised programme.

### **The boat and the fence (Ian's case)**

Ian's experience with the outside area is similar to Jennifer's case. The only differences are that Ian is fascinated with things such as animals (bee pictures of them together with the

ladybird) and unexpected sounds such as aeroplanes and the building of the new boat on the garden (child's pictures, walking with video tour and comments). Jennifer's interest is climbing on the tree and seeing the things from a height, Ian is keen on the boat, he is trying to depict the bee on the camera and when he hears the aeroplane he attempts to capture it on his camera. Arthur is interested in finding out about conkers smashing them and sprinkling them raising up his hands. What has been found problematic in all these cases is the fact that practitioners are not interpreting these interests and activities and transferring them to the next planning, while in some cases they even prevent the children from exploring (see Jennifer's case above). This argument is supported in the following event that was the first one related to the boat. The event took place on the 8<sup>th</sup> May and it should bear in mind that the practitioner has already called the children for snack time (Appendix, B.4.4§: 32). The extract shows clearly how adult intervention and demands for the child to follow the routine programme of the setting prevent the child's desire to talk about the boat that has recently appeared in the garden. Ian's picture was like a last chance to view the boat showing to me how children can experience the existence of a fence that can let them see the things through the gaps but without giving a full overview and access to what is happening in the broader area. The event on 12<sup>th</sup> May was similar to the above. Once more Ian asked to take a picture of the boat using my arms as a means to have a better overview of the boat. Also on the 13<sup>th</sup> May Ian used the telephone informing me of his desire to go and play on the boat (see Appendix B.4.4§33). The boat has been depicted in Ian's photographs one more time on 3<sup>rd</sup> June. Having carried the digital blue camera from his bike Ian goes around occasionally stopping and taking some pictures. Suddenly he stopped and he went over to the fence to take some pictures:

*Ian is looking through the fence. 'The boat!' he says trying to take picture of the boat raising up the camera. He is struggling, he tries to step on the wheelbarrow that is close by but the practitioner said to him 'Ian get down from the wheelbarrow'. He turns the digital blue camera left, right, up and down checking the screen he makes two more trials, and then he gets upset 'Ohh man!' he said and he takes a picture of the wheelbarrow. He gets on his bike, after going around he comes back and he tries to take one last picture of the boat. A practitioner calls the children to come inside and he gives me back the camera.*

(3<sup>rd</sup> June Field Notes)



## Analysis

All the above examples show how the fence is working as an obstacle for children to see and experience the world beyond the barriers. In the last example the child is particularly frustrated and from the pictures he took it is evident that he is making one last effort to capture the boat. The photos taken by Jennifer and Ian are reflection of how children can see the world through the fence. Everything is in a higher position and they are trying to solve the problem by stepping on the objects that are nearest to the fence. The large volume of pictures taken before children had access to the broader area of the garden with the boat shows that the camera is working as a means to bring the things close to children's trajectory as an active agent in the child's hands (Lenz Taguchi, 2010). Lenz Taguchi states that the meaning is an 'ongoing performance' where each component is trying to become understandable to each other. What a child tries to say through the camera matters as it shows to the researcher what a child is thinking. As Lenz Taguchi (2010) argues, adults should scrutinise what kind of knowledge is produced through the tools that are provided for the child. The child, the practitioner and the researcher together with the camera are making meaning. However it is questionable what kind of knowledge they produce? The meaning is antithetical between the child and the teacher while the researcher is in the middle of the antithesis sharing it with the both parties.

However all the parties are aware of the rule of 'not stepping' on objects. In all the above cases I have been invited by the child to share the experience and inasmuch to break the rule (Corsaro, 2005a, 2003) or view together what is beyond the fence (Rogoff, 1990) while at the same time the digital blue camera is a means through which the children can express their thoughts. Lenz Taguchi (2010: 64) states that the way observation is used as an apparatus of documentation matters, as when an adult reports an event it basically 'cuts' the experience creating what she calls 'temporary constructed distinction', meaning that many inherited components are missing. Indeed looking through the 'Planning for Children's Interests' many components are missing. The above aforementioned events are not reported at all, while in the case of the wooden house, although practitioners were expecting the children to be fascinated from the first day that appears that nothing has been reported, and integrated into the future planning. Considering that all the above events were not part of the planned programme and 'guessing' that the meaning of participation captures only those activities that are part of the planning.

Looking through the 'Planning for Children's Interests' correlated with those events which I have captured on her camera, it has been found that the event is documented with just a

simple sentence. For instance, the following example in the planning of 24<sup>th</sup> June shows how an event is documented when it is part of the planning. The practitioners decided to place bubble-wrap paper in the outside area right in front of the boat for children to hear the sound riding their bikes. Arthur during his tour with his bike hears the noise of the bubbles and gets off his bike and pops wrapping paper with his finger. I share this experience with the child and push my fingers into the bubble creating a noise. Every time a bubble pops Arthur and I are happy making facial gestures showing excitement. However, Arthur struggles to create the noise with his finger saying to me ‘I can’t do it’. He then tries to find new ways of making the bubble pop by placing the paper in the wheel of the bike, riding it and asking ‘What shall we do then?’ I had decided not to intervene further as a practitioner was observing the event also being enthusiastic (behind the camera) as Arthur was meeting the expectations of her planning. The practitioner did not intervene and stayed in distance as an observer without interacting with Arthur although he asked ‘What shall we do then?’ Consequently what has been reported in the reflection on the planning is: ‘*Arthur, popping the poppers with his finger and laughing*’ (Planning for Children’s Interests) despite the fact that I showed the practitioner the video of the whole episode. The description recorded by the practitioners is missing many components of the event. Factors such as how the event started, what the adult did and said, how the child tried to solve his problem, the richness of the emotions are not reported while his mother mentions to me that they usually do such activities at home after having bought some digital devices or fragile items. Arthur has been meeting the expectations of the programme due to his previous experience from home but the practitioners do not encourage him to extend his experience as long as he meets their expectations. What also has been found to be problematic is the fact that the bubble wrapping paper in the next planning has been placed on a pillar and has been integrated into the planning on 26<sup>th</sup> June, a day that Arthur is not visiting the centre. Similar findings have also been reported concerning the event with the van and the cornflour in the case of Ian.

Returning to the events described in this section, although the practitioners are aware of the above events none of them (including also the wooden house) were integrated and reported in the reflection of the ‘Planning for Children’s Interests’. Therefore what Lenz Taguchi describes as dangerous in the ‘cut’ process of documentation is apparent in the above examples (see also Chapter 2). In other words the child’s intention is not taken into consideration despite the fact that it appears for an extended period, frequently and with different participants involved over time. The researcher is working as a transmitter of the

meaning between the two parties like the case of the Arthur and the fence (kicking the fence). According to Lenz Taguchi's (2010: 65) notion of intra-active pedagogy:

‘the emphasis is on independent and mutual ‘listening’ and observing that expands the focus from merely dealing with the intra-and inter-personal relationships in and between children, children and adults and what is said and done, to be inclusive of the performative agency of the material in the intra-actions of learning events’.

In all the above events the performative agency of the material is correlated with the items the child is trying to reach, access, see and that have capture child's attention together with the camera that is used as a tool to bring them closer or for informing the adult what they want.

Although the events are drawn to the adult's attention, the practitioners are continuously focused on the rule of ‘not stepping’ ignoring the children's intentions. Corsaro (2003, 2005a, 2009) states that adults gradually become more flexible over the rules as long as they continuously perceive children's effort to break them. However, in these events the practitioner's attitude is focused on just repeating the rule and preventing the child from stepping on objects. The reason of why the child is stepping is not taken into consideration and in many cases is even ignored. Similar findings have been found also in the Greek case. In these cases despite the fact that the children are trying to explain to the adult the reasons why they are climbing, they are still prevented from climbing on objects to see things.

Further, it is worthwhile to mention here that as long as the gate in the fence was open the fence had never become part of the children's photos (except the aforementioned case with Ian). It seems that when the children had the choice to access the area they were following their programme while when the access was not permitted, children were prevented from following their own planning. Although the practitioners were aware of the children's desire to climb up to see beyond the fence, for safety reasons (practitioner's comments) they prevented the children from doing it by repeating the rule ‘*get down*’ or ‘*not stepping*’ or ‘*come here*’. In this case, the practitioners employed an attitude which did not allow for any choice or negotiation. Considering Rogoff's (1990) notion of guided participation as it is described through the lens of intent participation, the practitioners being aware of the children's intention instead of trying to change the way they approach the children finding a common shared meaning (and effectively changing the unwilling behaviour) adopted a

dominant and invasive role. Despite the fact that stepping was related with safety they did not even guide the children on how to play and act safely during their play. However, the children were in need of meaning making, as the photos shows.

It has been found that since an early age children are particularly responsive to morality and integrity in teacher's strategies (Johansson, 2001, 2002, 2005) and here looking through the child's intention there is nothing wrong. This study contends that the notion of what Corsaro describes as secondary adjustment emerges from this notion of justice that the children have understood since their early years. The child climbs up to watch, observing and try to reach a toy that is beyond the fence or in a high position. None of the adults negotiates with children as to why they cannot have access to the broader area of the garden (case of Arthur previous and present section with the 'Connected Four') and why they should not step on the objects and what alternative they could have for the completion of their mission. Rogoff's (2003) model of a 'community of learners' discusses the significance of shared meaning (see also Jordan, 2004) and it seems that when the child fails to achieve this sharing of meaning they try to find other strategies (Corsaro, 2005) such as climbing up or referring to the researcher. The example of Arthur who does not speak directly to practitioner Caroline about permission shows how the child places the researcher in the position to negotiate the access. However, the practitioner's answer is repeated without any further explanation. Konzal (2001) states that it is not an easy process for children to understand that they can share the meaning of agency and power. The process of building up a community of learners is lengthy. Furthermore, the above examples show how children's action and efforts are misunderstood.

Referring to Corsaro's (2005a) point about children having control of their surroundings, it is clear that these children have a sense of what is dangerous (the case of Ian with the wheelbarrow) and they are particularly careful over that. The review of literature (Chapter 2) discussed the 'assembly-line instruction model of learning' and this study has argued that the Greek case has followed that model. From the description of the findings it seems that the English model of working is following neither the 'intent participation model' nor to 'the assembly line instruction' model although the EYFS (DfES, 2007) promotes a 'holistic' way of working with young children incorporating and based on a number of theories and practices of working with children (see Chapter 2). Rogoff, (1994 and Rogoff et al, 2003; Matusov and Rogoff, 2002) compare a 'one sided' philosophy with intent participation. The one sided philosophy refers to those approaches where the programme is

adult-run or child-run respectively. On the other side is the philosophy of a ‘community of learners’.

In these models of participation Rogoff (1994) states that it does not matter whether or not learning occurs, but from where the knowledge comes from. The two philosophies are based on different relationships between the adult and the child. For instance, in the adult-run instruction, knowledge is transmitted from the adult to the child (case of Greece). Similar to the adult-run instruction, in the child-run model knowledge is acquired by the children themselves through relationships with their friends. Rogoff (1994: 212) states that the child-run model is problematic because ‘the idea is that if you could leave them alone among themselves, they would discover all the things that humans have discovered over the centuries (inventing how to read and write and other technologies)’. Simply the child is not interacting and exchanging ideas and thus not contributing to the culture and following an isolated pathway.

The official policy in England (EYFS) recognises children’s diverse ways of learning and thinking correlated with the importance of following a child’s personal needs and interests. However, from the case of England it seems that the integration of the principles and the goals of the framework in practice there is a pendulum between the two philosophies. The data shows that there are occasions when the programme is organised according to a child’s directions (the ‘*clap your little hands*’ example) with the adult encouraging and listening to the child but on the other side there are cases when the child is either neglected (the bike, the traffic signs, etc) or strongly directed (the notion that the child has to give up what they are doing in the name of the next circle time or snack time activity, see case of the Ian playing music, Ian taking pictures of the boat).

The above contradictions in the English data will be analysed through the notion of what Lenz Taguchi (2010) names as intra-active pedagogy and the meaning of documentation. The observation has being theorised as a tool of documentation and planning (practitioners comments, EYFS). Thus video film and visual data are incorporated into that. However, Lenz Taguchi states that the documentation is itself an active agent fabricating discourses. Thus from one side the EYFS claims the notion of the competent and unique child (DfES, 2007) who has to be safe and protected and practitioners are aware of this through the regular training they attend and as the ‘*Planning of children’s Interest*’ shows. However the framework highlights that overprotection should be avoided as this could work against child’s learning about possible dangers (DfES, 2007-Card 1, 3 ‘a unique child keeping

safe’) emphasising at the same time the need for children to explore boundaries and rules, suggesting that the adult responsible explains those rules to the child by acquiring understanding of their (rules) existence and for children to learn naturally what is wrong and what is right. Conversely, the practitioners are practically not encouraging the children to understand the rules, but instead they just ignored children’s intentions just observing without seeing what the child wants to say (a similar findings to the Greek case – see section 4.2).

Lenz Taguchi (2010) challenges the meaning of observation as a basic tool in documentation arguing that the meaning of ‘see’ is different from ‘observe’ as it is more complex process rather than a simple record of the event. The teacher did not analyse the mutual intra-activity and in the present cases not even the inter-subjectivity focusing only on what the child is doing ‘climbing’, ‘refusing to come for snack or circle time’ or ‘saying’ reporting only the most intimate events (for instance those that are correlated with the planning) and leaving out those that are correlated with rules or child’s actions in the outside area. It is obvious from the above events that there is no integration of children’s outside activities into the curriculum, and indicator of that is the fact that practitioners during the period the children were spending more time in outside area were transferring the planning from inside outside while the cases of the wooden house, the tree, the boat, the water twister and Ian’s fascination of the bee, the aeroplane or the builder are not integrated at all. However, all the above events offer multiple opportunities of integration into the curriculum goals and principles. Taking for instance the events with the wooden house, children’s actions and comments show their knowledge about senses (Cindy and Jennifer can hear better when they are in the house), mathematics (counting, shapes- the house has been falling down from the top of the tree), socialisation (the rabbit visitor) learning about the environment (spiders and other animals, music), classification (the dog’s should be in the wooden house). The above events present the richest of opportunities that this kind of environment offers children to learn, explore and extend. However, the practitioners appear to be distanced from the children’s experience. Lenz Taguchi (2010: 72) states that the passive observer is just watching without seeing while the meaning of ‘see’ is correlated with ‘doing’ and ‘practising’ it is like practitioners has been convinced to see only some parts of the experience the ‘what’ the child is doing and not ‘why’ the child is doing in the above cases. Here Lenz Taguchi’s idea is correlated the theoretical discourses that the adult is accessing when listening to the child. What the practitioner hears and how they act is correlated with the protocols of what they are thinking and expecting. However Lenz Taguchi (2010: 94) argues that the adult should be ‘active’ and

not 'reactive' when doing observation, as the pedagogical tool of documentation should be seen not as a 'diagnostic tool' but as collaborative and creative with the child and the surroundings.

### **Changing and adapting methods within the context - understanding the cultural differences**

The two cases of Greece and England present considerably different contexts regarding the purpose of the day care centre. The social background is similar only if it is viewed as representative of each country and how being 'in need' or 'at risk' is understood in each country (Stoltz and Churchill, 2007; Penn, 2007; Corsaro et al., 2002). Having a low income in Greece is not related to being a less educated parent while in the English centre some parents were unemployment, single mothers, and divorced mothers, parents without any University degree. In the case of Greece all the children were from families where both parents were working, but they generally had a low income.

It has been found that children in Greece used more verbal communication to express their perspectives. They were willing to watch the video and make comments, while at the same time their way of speaking was generally sophisticated (see Chapter 4, Section 1, and 2). Additionally, they regularly expressed preferences over which data they wanted to see again, often skipping the videos related with 'circle time'. In contrast, the children in England did not often make comments, they were watching the video by laughing or they declined to watch videos and pictures. These significant differences inevitably influence the research design between the two countries as the division of the methods has been presented in Chapter 3. However, this study found that parents' social background and the children's ability to use verbal communication are not the only factors that can influence the research design. There are a considerable number of events and factors that have led to the modification of the methods that have been used to elicit the children's perceptions.

First of all, although the programme in Greece is strictly designed according to the adult's interests and generally based on the notion that at all children have to do the same activity at the same time, practitioners make a use of their speech in almost all of the activities (not always as a dialogue but also as a monologue). It has been found that talking at the children was inherent to the whole programme and routines. For instance, during the time the whole class were sitting at a table doing handicrafts the pedagogue would start telling stories. On 30th November practitioner Anastasia remembered that was the anniversary of Saint Andrew while children were doing crafts for Christmas. She asked the children if

they had any relatives named 'Andrew' while they were doing their crafts. According to Greek tradition the anniversary of a Saint's name means that those who have the same name were celebrating their name day. In Greece they celebrate the name day and not the birthday, only in the last few decades has the individual birthday been celebrated as an idea coming from a West European tradition. Hence the practitioner started discussing the names of relatives and friends with the children.

Similar events have not been observed in the English context. For the English context sitting at the table means the child has decided to be involved in an activity and the pedagogues just delivered the material to the child, without interacting further. At best the practitioner would just ask the child whether they want a particular material such as 'blue colour or red colour'. This obviously influenced the way children used their speech (although it can be interrelated also with class and habitus – Bourdieu, 1991).

In most of the video material from England practitioners did not have a conversation with the children during an activity-routine, in contrast with the Greek ones although in most of the cases practitioner's voice is dominant within a video, rather than children's. Additionally, during snack time or breakfast time the children in Greece used to discuss with a practitioner a topic that arose in the flow of the moment, in contrast with the English case where children were generally quiet and only if a practitioner asked something such as 'would you like milk or water?' did the children answer.

Corsaro (2005a: 23) agrees that 'the very predictability of routines provides a framework for producing, displaying, interpreting cultural knowledge, values, and beliefs'. Starting from simple facts and questions that take place at a predictable time such as the lunch time, the adult and child can extend and embellish the routines while children demonstrate proficient capability of developing their cultural knowledge and skills. Despite the fact that any confusion may remain unsolved, Corsaro asserts that the adult and child will have the opportunity to refine again issues that left them puzzled in other routine times due to the character of the routines themselves. These routines are repeated again and again every day for the same or different children. Bearing in mind the work of Gallacher (2005), Corsaro (2005a), Williams (2001a), Löfdahl (2005), Emilson and Folkesson (2006), Tobin, (1995, 1989) and Alexander (2001), my first thought was to define the kind of routines that each setting followed and find commonalities. Looking also at the outdoor play project of Waller (2006) I guessed that in order to capture the child's perception there were two kinds



of routines in the setting that I should look for: those that are defined by adults and those are created by children themselves in their own spaces.

However, the context and the structure of the programme was so different that in the English case focusing on activities was not helping to capture the child's perception but only to find the frequency of whether an activity had any involvement or not. I changed the focus of the observation and followed one child over a day as the individual child's routines are different from the routines of other children. Hence what has been determined by Alexander's (2001) and Tobin's (1989) work as common activities in different countries are not feasible when you search for child's perceptions.

Additionally, what has been determined as important from the Greek children has no applicability in the English context, for instance the 'wolf' (material culture) has not been found in the English case. From the review of literature the only study that has been found comparing young children's perceptions in different countries is Corsaro's (2003, 2005a, 2005b). All the rest examined the routines within the same context while Tobin's work compares the typicality of a day in relation to adult's perceptions and from adult's interpretations. From a child's point of view, what is important for a Greek child is not important for an English child and that significantly challenged the whole idea of comparing similar activities.

Another concern in relation to children's competence in verbal expression comes from the English practitioners' beliefs and attitudes. Field note observations show that there was a general notion that as long as a child was not talking they were not understandable by the adults (see for further Appendix 5, §1). Another factor is the habit of practitioners in England regarding documentation. Video film and pictures of the children are regularly taken as a part of the EYFS (DfES, 2007) framework based on observation, but they never involve the child in the situation to ask for their points of view. For example, in one episode Ian was playing with a cartoon and a practitioner took a picture of him and said:

*'Stop for a while so that I can take a picture of you....and smile!'* The child poses and he waits for the practitioner to take a picture'.

(15 April England, field notes).

Thus, when I entered the setting for the first time the children had already experienced a different use of the same digital technology. This fact has influenced the way children

exercise agency in the research methods. In the Greek setting the practitioners did not work in this way with children and the use of camera was an innovative process for them. The training and the way of working with the technology was introduced by myself. Another significant factor is related to the frequency of the attendance. Children in England do not attend the setting every day due to the fact they pay high fees. Only the child whose parent is working in the setting or those that are attending an inclusive programme could attend for free and every day. In this way different children were attending every day. Additionally, when the number of children was high, extra staff were involved on a volunteer basis. Thus the children became used to seeing different people every day. Under these circumstances the meaning of 'peer' in the way that it is defined by Corsaro (2005a: 109) as 'the cohort or group of children who spend time in every day basis' is not so strong in the English setting. Although some of the children have attended this setting since they were infants, what Rutanen (2007: 65) calls the 'history of co-adjustments' is less strong than for children in the Greek setting.

This context is exactly the opposite in Greece. The same children attend every day and they are part of the same group, whilst the parents do not pay any tuition fees. The small number of children in the group (seven children in total) in connection with the fact that at the same time they are expected to engage in the same activity creates a strong bond between the children. The effect of this bond combined with the fact the group is organised by age makes children to understand easier the newcomers.

The above factors may create different relationships between me and the child relating to the building of a trustful relationship as I can spot easier all the members of the group while children can see my presence, having different role by practitioners without betray them when they break a rule. For the children in England my appearance in the setting may be viewed as part of the structure of the programme, as children see different people everyday. The Greek children, however, started looking at me straight after I entered the setting. I was a stranger who was coming for the first time in the setting. The children in England did not look at me once I entered the setting - they carried on with their activities. In many cases I even went closer to make my appearance more visible to them and started interacting with them. Very often different people or children visited the centre, playing or becoming involved in their activities. In the Greek setting I become part of the group and sometimes my absence led the children to interrogate me.

*'Why you did not come yesterday? We came....yesterday and you were not here!'*

(Christos, 3<sup>rd</sup> December, Field Notes)

*'The other day you were not here ....but we were ....why are you not coming every day as all of us? Your mum does not work everyday?'*

(Maria, 11<sup>th</sup> December, Field Notes)

Further, the fact that I was a fluent Greek speaker and an early years' practitioner in Greece no doubt enhanced this relationship. Being an early years' educator for more than five years in the actual Greek day care centre and speaking Greek as native speaker helped the children to trust me, although they mentioned my role as a 'different practitioner from the others' (Christos, 12FG field notes). Looking at the English context, the fact that I was not a completely fluent English speaker may have led to the children needing more time to adjust themselves in this situation.

Even calling my name was a difficult job for them (20<sup>th</sup> May, Field Notes). Additionally, it should be borne in mind that having a Greek nationality influenced the way I was interacting and communicating with children in England, and as such it was completely different from the practitioners. For me meeting a child in the morning means you welcome them by cuddling, kissing, taking them in your arms, and asking about how they have spent the weekend or the afternoon at home. This is a habit that is a common in Greek culture, once you meet somebody you kiss and exchange news. This was also the way I was interacting with children, being a pre-school teacher in the Greek setting and being researcher in the English setting. An attitude that has not been realised until the time three English studies came to my attention. I spotted the same finding in association with the English practitioner's emotional engagement with the infants and toddlers. Elfer (2007), Manning-Morton (2006) and Colley (2006) argue that physically handling infants and toddlers is an important factor to establish shared meaning with the child. It is unlikely the three authors found that English practitioners are "denied" opportunities to establish such an emotional engagement with very young children due to attachment theory, focusing mostly in offering comfort when the child was under stress, was crying or becoming suddenly aggressive (see Appendix C.5 §2).

Degotardi and Pearson (2009) argue that in early years' settings attachment theory should be seen from a sociocultural stand point simply because in the setting children are building up relationships beyond the notion of dyadic adult-child interaction. For instance, it is

argued that young children in settings are communicating to develop relationships with peers and other people in a way that they could not do at home. As such different relationship functions are built up beyond the idea that the preliminary relationship with the mother or the teacher plays significant role. As has been discussed in Chapter 2, the general understanding of the early years' settings is that of 'home like elements' and the role of pedagogues as 'mother like' (Degotardi and Pearson 2009: 147). Such a universal understanding is problematic. Firstly, the English practitioners themselves do not appear to like such engagement with the child (Elfer, 2007). Secondly, as Degotardi and Pearson (2009) argue, different cultures demand different kind of relationships. There are societies where the emphasis is given to the collectivist notion of relationship and not in individualistic -dyadic relationship.

Hence, when the Birth to Three Matters (2002) document was first published, David et al. (2004) clarified some elements in working holistically with under-threes in Sure Start settings. The 'attachment theory' of Bowlby is particularly emphasised in the relationship between the child and the practitioner (ibid 53). The practitioner is defined as a 'key worker' (Elfer et al., 2003) a term that has been discussed as problematic to be used to define the occupation of those working with young children (see Chapter 2). However, it is a reality in the Sure Start settings and every practitioner should pay particular attention to particular children. There are practical reasons that prevent a practitioner from being a key worker for each child. Firstly because the same children are not attending every day while on the other hand newcomers are coming every day. Secondly, because not all practitioners are working on a full time basis a key worker practitioner cannot come on all the days that the focus child is attending. These are the practical considerations. However there are also sociocultural factors. For instance the English practitioners understand their role in association with the child as promoting independence (Cameron, 2007; Elfer, 2007), this independence is correlated with emotional independence as well. Hence when the children are sitting at the table during the snack time the English practitioners are focusing on promoting the children's skill in using real knives to spread the butter on the toast and to express verbally their desire and choice 'do you want milk or water', or to go and ask for fruit by themselves if they want. In such a situation I was not welcome to go, sit and help the children during their snack time as the practitioner was telling the child 'Do it by yourself!' The practitioner was transferring the responsibility to the child and not to me and at that time I was not aware of the rule. I sat on the rocking chair and I waited for the children to finish their snack. Hence any possibilities to start discussing during snack time

with a child were practically impossible and not desired by the staff and in fact snack time was a very quiet activity.

In the Greek context, on the other hand, the collective notion is different. For instance sitting and having breakfast or snack means having a break from an organised activity. A practitioner and the children often start talking about issues that were not planned, or a practitioner may start talking about their next activity. Similarly I sat with the children and talked with them about events in their life inside and outside at the centre. Many times jokes were shared, such as when the children created moustaches with the nuttella as result of eating too much. Such interaction was not observed in the English case, while practitioners did not appear happy to see me helping a child when who was having difficulty spreading the butter on the toast. Snack time in the setting in England was an activity where everyone was focussed on the eating process.

In the Greek case the practitioner and me firstly asked the children who had not start eating yet whether or not they needed any help to cut the bread (the butter or nuttella was already prepared by the cook) or any kind of help with the meal. Sometimes the child asked for such help and in that case I or a practitioner helped or even fed the child. During that process many stories were shared. For instance, on one occasion the practitioners started telling stories about the food trying to convince the children to finish the meal or all the group was trying to convince a child to eat.

As such the Greek programme encourages relationships within the group and not within the individual. While, there were also cases when a parent asked me to encourage the child (e.g Christos) to eat a meal that the child was refusing. Such activities promoted the relationship between the child and me and it was been found that during mealtimes the children started revealing to me issues that concerned them such as the wolf, or the fact that they feel they have to go to the centre because their parents work and not because they want to go.

Under these circumstances it seems that my nationality and ability to speak the two languages created a different relationship between the participants and me. Additionally, my study shows that the contradiction between Emond's views (2005) and Corsaro's argument (2003) related to the way the researcher speaks and deals with the children, it seems that the answer is 'it depends on the situation'. In both cases the children appeared to trust me and expressed their point of view, establishing their own common way of

sharing. Actually, through the example of the Cindy I realised what it means to experience being interrogated by ‘the expert’ (in the same way that adults are asking the children) and be viewed as an ‘incompetent adult’ (Corsaro, 2003: 23).

The last factor that plays the most significant role in the way the research took place and influenced the way of working in both cases is the role of the gatekeeper (Flewitt, 2005a), as has been discussed in the ethics section. Additionally, the practitioners in England understood my role to be similar to theirs, they wanted time to remind the children about rules such as ‘not stepping on the bike’ or at ‘snack time, we have to get in’ and not being directed by the child. The fact that I let a child step on the bike while she was trying to see the digger, or the boat had been understood by practitioner as a lack of attention to the child’s safety and security. This complaint was reported to me by the manager who fully understood my position and recognised the practitioner’s exaggeration as the area where children wanted to view was safe and surrounded by a second wall. What for me was ‘toddler style’ (Løkken, 2000a, 2000b, 2009) or children’s effort to create play routines (Corsaro, 2005a, Corsaro and Molinari, 1990), for practitioners was an issue of safety. Hence quite often in my diary I recorded ‘written not verbal narrative’ at the present moment (Stern, 2004) on reflection was:

*I stopped the child from stepping on the bike while she wanted to show me.....*

*I was scared the child will step on the bike and then I should apologise again....*

*I did not know what to do thinking of practitioner’s attitude.....*

*I did not want to create any trouble in the programme and I stopped child’s action....*

My attitude as a researcher was influenced by this and that was transferred to the way I was interacting with the children. Writing about personal feelings through the field notes I reflected on the way I was working and I realised that for a certain period I had started to discourage children from doing things, respecting the practitioners’ desire and working against the child’s position. All the above factors are connected with the fact that each child is a unique and different entity and influences the research design and the way I explored children’s perspectives together with the children thus creating significant differences in the way the research took place in each setting.

In this way, this study cannot offer any recipe on the methods for research with very young children as the method depends on the 'here and now' situation and what Stern (2004) calls 'the present moment' that involves some times no verbal story but feelings which emerge and create narratives and on the flow of the moment changing the participants actions. As Robert et al. (2007) state placing feelings and emotions in the field notes can help the researcher to find out if other people felt the same (like in the case of Ian see Chapter 4) or how they experience the 'lived experience' identify biases and changing attitudes.

Issues related with the whole context of the day care centre, the regulation and the role of gatekeeper, children's agency have been discussed. The question then is why these two day care centres that are so different part of the same researcher's questions and project. Rogoff (2003:14) states that looking through different cultures gives a better understanding of aspects often taken for granted and being unquestioned for a long time. As Rogoff states (2003: 14) 'many individuals feel that their own community's ways are being questioned when they begin to learn about the diverse ways of other groups'. The lack of awareness of different ways of thinking or acting (Miller, 2008) does not let people recognise what is biologically or culturally determined. Rogoff states in order to understand how culture plays a major role in peoples lives we need to examine how people use the cultural tools in their daily activities and how they contribute to the cultural traditions. Very interestingly Rogoff (2003) underlines in comparative studies the danger of participants being offended by realising the existence of different cultures, which inevitable query what was remaining unquestioned so far.

The above events influenced my well being in the day care centre but the whole context and the origins of each event have to be examined before making any judgment. For this reason Rogoff (2003:17) demonstrates that in the interpretation of the data 'we need to understand the coherence of what people from different communities do, rather than simply determining that some other group do not do what 'we' do, or do it as well or in the way that we do it, or jumping to conclusions that their practices are barbaric', even if that different community is related to the researcher's way of working and the practitioner's way of working. For practitioners, as long as the researcher is a pre-school teacher she has to behave as such. For me even if I am a practitioner, I come to play a different role in the day care centre as a researcher.

Matusov (2007) argues that the unit of analysis is an open-ended entity depending on the purpose, the focus of the research, the participants and so on although it seems to be inappropriate for generalizations. However the weaknesses of one study could be added as a piece to other small studies giving a broader and richer understanding. Matusov (2007) moves beyond the notion of data analysis recommending a process of data synthesis. Pertaining to that matter the unit of analysis is never known before the research occurred (see also Chapter 2), therefore it is the synthesis of data which determines the unit of analysis, while the participant should always use the opportunity to be involved in this process of replying as ‘there is no last word for either the researcher or the research participants’ (Matusov, 2007: 328).

## **Discussion**

Data is analysed and discussed through a sociocultural model focussing on shared meaning and not only on individual positions as the isolation of specific events often leads to the alteration of their nature (Robbins, 2005). The starting point for this participatory research is what the child shares with the researcher, then the researcher’s observations and then discussion with parents and practitioners.

Children’s desire for cultural membership through the use of real tools is highlighted through the Jennifer’s, Maria’s, Christos’, Ian’s and Allan’s perspectives. In the examples reported above children and adults may have different perceptions of the use of real tools. All children used tools during their play in a manner that appeared to be different to the adult’s initial expectations. On the other hand what was emphasised in the responses from the Greek practitioners about the use of real tools in their programmes was associated with children’s age as indicated in the following interview comments:

*This is not for their age.*

*They are too young to do that.*

*I am scared to give them scissors because they are still too young*

*I placed those books in the drawer as they are for older children.*



*I am scared they are going to harm each other and then I will have to apologise to their parents.*

A number of children, however, indicated that they would like to play with real tools. While most of the parents (of the same children) confirmed that at home they involve their children in these 'mature' activities. Alternatively, in case of Ian and Allan, the practitioner did not consider in her observation the fact that the children wanted to see the digger and then included the transformation of the digger into their play experiences. When the practitioner did not share or reify children's meaning the child ignored her and actually stopped the activity. With regards to Christos', Maria's and Panayiotis use of real tools, both the practitioner and their mother were aware that they did not like playing with the plastic 'fake' tools. However, it seems that the reason why they did not respond to the child's perspective was due to the values and restrictions they met in the programme, the schedule and the regulation of the setting. As Rinaldi (2006) notes, the inside life of the setting should be connected with the outside events and the communication between them to become of great value.

With regard to children's participation in the curriculum 'the children participate in reconstructing the adult's initial conceptions through their actions' (Rutanen, 2007: 66) but it seems here that the adult's perspective and authority discourage the process. Brennan (2007: 7) contends that due to the fact that children and practitioners in settings are separated from the mature activities the 'children demonstrate spontaneous and frequent attempts to reconnect with adults and their lives, and also with the wider social and historical community'. Thus every time a child sees an adult doing an activity, she tries to find out ways to participate such as just observing (Intent participation, Rogoff et al , 2003), or transfer the experience into the play (Christos and Jennifer), or even trying at the same moment to be involved (Jennifer's example). A further consideration for participation here relates to the social construction of toys. For Barthes (1957) the presentation of the adult's world into children's toys is embedded in such way that there is no opportunity for the child to reject any involvement. The child is presented as 'owner, as user, never as creator; he does not invent the world, he uses it: there are prepared for him, actions without adventure, without wonder, without joy' (Barthes, 1957: 54). Thus through the provision of toys the child, according to Barthes, is prepared for the adult's world.

Consequently, the construction of the toys defines the role of the child as a consumer and not as an inventor and creator. Christos' and Jennifer's perspective of the tools as 'fake'

and the lack of response to this from the practitioners also suggest a number of implications for pedagogy as it is questionable how well a child's learning and well being can be supported effectively when the provision and materials are not valued by the children. Cannella (1997: 152) argues that professional discourses often 'silence children as they are used to create a 'pretend' world for them, a world that has nothing to do with their real lives'.

Not only was this tension was found in the child's perception of the curriculum but also in the use of 'participatory' tools used in this study. Indeed in the case of Greece, the first thing that the children did every morning as I entered the setting was to grasp my notebook and write with my pens. Using notebook and pen was not permitted under normal circumstances. Also, after a while the children demanded that the Digital blue camera they were encouraged to use should be replaced with a camera similar to the researcher's. For example:

Panayiotis (1<sup>st</sup> December Field notes)

*I don't want this camera*

*Do you mean the digital blue camera?*

*I want the other one like yours*

Christos (3<sup>rd</sup> December Field notes)

*Where is your silver camera? I don't like this one* (meaning the digital blue camera)

Maria (8<sup>th</sup> December: Field notes)

*I don't like this black (camera)...it is like fake...give me yours, the real one!*

*But you can take pictures even with that one.*

*I don't like that one. I want something like yours can you understand what I am telling you?*

Furthermore, the researcher's beliefs about the child and childhood influence the research design (Harden et al., 2000; Thomson, 2007). The children's comments about the digital blue camera reveal that the methods used in this study also appear to be influenced by the theories about age segregation. On reflection I would question why a 'child friendly' tool was chosen to elicit children's perceptions.

A further pitfall that Robbins (2005) has discussed in research with very young children is children's answers to adult's questions. For example, Christos' answers were not what I was expected to hear. Looking again and again the videos I was convinced the child was enjoying playing with trolley and the tools. However, in different contexts, Christos confirmed to me that it is not what he would like to do in the centre. This supports Jordan's (2004) model of 'co-construction' where children and adults share ideas, values and create meaning. This model gives the child initiative and cultivates the idea of 'constructing with others' (Jordan, 2004: 33). As, Jordan points out, adults need to learn how to see unknown aspects of the child - of what the child knows and thinks. As Rinaldi (2006: 101) states, they need to develop a 'culture of research' when we are working with children through documentation.

Another problematic area for research with young children using participatory tools concerns the interpretation of data when children decline to make a comment immediately or shortly after a film is made. Assuming Christos' perspective of the incident with the trolley without his comments would have led the researcher to misunderstanding, misinterpretation and oversimplification of the significance of the activity. Additionally from Ian's perspective there are still questions as to why he did not want his sister to be in the crèche. Unfortunately in doing research with these very young children they very often declined to speak about the video (Ian). On other occasions the children may invite the researcher to join them, even determining rules about whether or not to use the camera and put aside the notebook for collecting data. However, in all the above cases the child has clear awareness of what the researcher is recording and intentionally let her participate in the activity. Thus, it could be argued that the children exercised some power and authority over the researcher's agenda and a reactive method (Corsaro, 2005a), may facilitate this possibility. However, the photographic and video images do not empower children on their own it is the shared construction of knowledge around conversations with the children based on their photographs that can enable children's meaning to prevail. As Cook and Hess (2007: 44) argue the danger is that:

'receiving a child's commentary is the end as well as the beginning of the process. It was the end of the attempt by the adults to find out a child's understanding and the beginning of an adult interpretation of what has been revealed. Importantly, the second process was unmediated by the children'.

As Dahlberg et al. (2007: 157-8, Rinaldi, 2006) argue, documentation plays an important role in understanding children life's giving a starting point for dialogue and make visible aspects that were blurred. However, what it is documented and from whose perspectives is crucial. Gallacher and Gallagher (2006) assert that participatory research is not part of children's culture but an adult-constructed phenomenon. There is an uneven and interchangeable power between the adult and the child as the former is not certain about the response of the child. Further, it is possible that children may also exercise agency with the cameras but chose not to contribute to the research agenda (Gallacher and Gallagher, 2006). It is argued here that the regular use of 'participatory tools' in research in early years settings can form new positions and different relations. Goldman-Segall (1998) points out that through using visual data there is undividable relationship between the tools, the child, the adult who conducted the research and the whole environment. If the adult researcher 'repositions' herself into the community and becomes a member, her voice is one among the many others. In this process a 'culture for shared collaborative 'authorship' and distributed co-construction' is created' (Goldman-Segall, 1998: 88).

## **Conclusion**

In this chapter I have briefly reported on research aiming to elicit the perspectives of young children under three years old, with particular reference to their views of the curriculum in ECEC settings. Drawing on both sociocultural theory and recent work in sociology I have argued that in order to understand the agency and voice of the child it is necessary to investigate how these are co-constructed within the context of both settings and family life.

I have discussed a number of challenges relating to issues of power and agency for both research and pedagogy with young children. Firstly, I have argued that findings from this research demonstrate the problematic nature of the discourse and construct of age segregation and discuss how this impacts on both early years' pedagogy and also research *with* young children. In this respect, even when intending to seek young children's perspectives I would wish to acknowledge the need for researchers (including myself) to question their own inherent beliefs about the competence of two year old children and start from a position of Malaguzzi's (1996) concept of the 'rich child'. A further significant issue arising from the findings was the children's desire for cultural membership through the use of real tools, that were available for pedagogy and research, (highlighted through the Jennifer's, Ian's, Arthur's and Christos', Panayiotis and Maria's perspectives). Here the importance involving children in 'mature' activities (Rogoff, 2003) is emphasised.

Secondly, the chapter has also alluded to some of the benefits and limitations of participatory tools and highlighted some methodological dilemmas for researchers. The starting point for this participatory research was what the child chose to share with the researcher, which was analysed with the researcher's observations and in discussion with parents and practitioners. Significantly this method afforded the possibility to develop a better understanding of how taken for granted assumptions about data from video material may give a false impression of a child's perspective. Here it is possible that, sometimes, the tools may inhibit mutuality and sustained engagement between children and adults. For example, another problematic area for research with young children using participatory tools concerns the interpretation of data when children decline to make a comment immediately or shortly after a film is made.

As Buchward et al. (2009) discuss, it is crucial for the researcher to search for opportunities to test what is found in the data. That may be idealistic but unfortunately doing research with young children does not lead in that direction at all times, simply because we are adults and we exercise power and authority over children's lives. What is important for the matter of both research and pedagogy is to find ways to gain access to children's peer's groups (Corsaro, 2000, 2003, 2005) through a 'reactive method' (Corsaro, 2005a; Emond, 2005) based on mutual trust and respect. Thus, I would argue for a balanced approach to both research and pedagogy where both adults and children's voices influence the research design and the curriculum.

I conclude by arguing that there is an urgent need to promote young children's participatory rights, as adult's authority and power is generally taken for granted. I feel strongly that participatory methods should be grounded within ethnographic study and not seen as a replacement for it (Gallacher and Gallagher, 2008). Research design is one of the many ways that adults direct children, as Cook and Hess (2007) point out. I would concur with Cook and Hess (2007, 43) that:

‘The use of the camera may have offered a glimpse into the child's world but the construction of the camera use for research may have been so embedded in our expectations that we narrowed our lens. The children's wider stories were in danger of being framed by researcher expectations’.

As Waller (2006) argues, rather than just thinking about engaging children's views to inform research (or influence curriculum planning and design) we need to rethink

participation also in terms of ‘spaces for childhood’ within which children can exercise their agency to participate in their own decisions, actions and meaning making, which may or may not involve them engaging with adults. This possibility is clearly illustrated by the perspectives of Christos and Jennifer discussed within this chapter.

From the themes identified below it became clear that there are a number of common topics such as circle time in both settings but there are others that do not appear in both countries (for instance wolf, transformation). These variables are interrelated with the cultural difference (more traditional in the Greek setting) and with the construction of the applied curriculum (more flexible in the English setting). For instance, the Greek programme is inherited with stories and customs coming from the traditional and religious legends (wolf, traditional songs etc). Conversely, the programme in the English setting is more flexible with more opportunities for children to move easily from one activity to another both inside and outside the classroom and encouraging the transformation of objects from one place to another. However, there are also two significant differences. In the Greek setting the emphasis is given to the social and cognitive development of the child and to the collective way of working, according to practitioners’ interviews. In the English case the emphasis is given to the individual development and the child’s ‘best interests’ (practitioners’ interviews). The collective way of working in the Greek case understood that at the same time all the group is involved in the same activity (video, interviews, field notes, observation). The individual way of working in the English case is applied by letting the child choose an activity that they want to participate in (video, interviews, observation).

## Chapter 5.

### Conclusion

#### Introduction

In this final chapter, the research questions will be discussed together with the findings in both cases. The chapter is divided into small sections. In each section findings will be summarised in relation to appropriate research questions. Finally, the implications for pedagogy are considered reflecting on my role as a researcher and a practitioner, discussing the limitations of the study and making recommendation for future work. Overall this study demonstrates the need for a balance between the child, the practitioner and the family in early years' pedagogy. The family seems to be not fully involved in the planning in both cases, where a discontinuity between the programme and the values in each setting was identified. However, the events in both cases demonstrate children's competence and agency within various activities, suggesting the need to recognise peer culture, intent participation and interpretative reproduction as significant elements in understanding children's contribution to the curriculum. Children's diverse ways of expressing feelings is viewed as significantly important while the meaning of 'present moment' and 'teaching to the moment' should be recognised as principle determinants in children's and adult's decisions to participate in and share an activity by learning together.

#### 5.1 How children express their intentions during an activity. How do children 'participate' in the activity?

The findings of the Greek case have challenged to a certain level the children's perception through an adult's interpretation. The findings have showed that what the child is doing during an activity is not always what she is thinking. Simply, it appears that what the adult can see is not always what the child means. The main question however is to what extent this challenges the research *with* children and the pedagogy with very young children. Christos' comments on the trolley activity support the above argument. In addition to this, the events with the wolf in the Greek day care centre show that the 'listening to' children process is more complicated and complex than it seems, and goes beyond a child's actions. Sometimes the children decided to remain silent (Clark and Moss, 2001), as in case of Panayiotis, but at other times the children decided not to make any comments because for

them it did not seem worthwhile. For example, when Christos said ‘better no comment...whatever (and he waved his hand)’ (Christos’ comments 12<sup>th</sup> February ‘Accessing the door’ Field Notes) while some other times there is a direct disagreement, as in Maria’s case. In all these cases children are taking different actions to face the situation which reveals their agency and competence.

Maria’s perception is also very complicated during circle time. She is participating actively but when I invited her to watch the video she became upset. For instance in the video 19JG MOVO6374 ‘the owl’ Maria makes all the gestures of the songs and she encourages Christos to do the same, laughing while looking at how the practitioner makes the gestures she said laughing: ‘*Christos!! Look how she is doing it!*’(2.18min). When I asked her to watch the video her reaction and comments were completely the opposite, surprising me (see Appendix C.5 §3) saying ‘*Stop it!!! I don’t like that song!*’ I wanted to explore Maria’s perspective of the ‘singing time’ in the video of 22<sup>nd</sup> January ‘Singing time!’ MOVO6429-30. I asked her again to watch a video of the circle time where she seems to enjoy the activity as she participates following practitioner’s directions and doing all the gestures in each song. When Maria watched the video she looked at me with a serious face (see Appendix C.5 §4) and her perception showed her dislike of the activity.

It has also been found in both countries (Greece and England) that the camera has been used as a means to bring things closer or as a means to reveal something that verbally is not easy to express (as in the examples Appendix 5§5) or as a way to celebrate an event (‘Allan and the pizza’ example) or when children are really fascinated by an event (‘Ian and the bee’ example). Further, especially in the Greek case, it was found that the camera is a safer way for children to express feelings that they are fearful of revealing (see Appendix C.5§6). Also, the children’s invitation for me to video film an activity is an indicator of their perceptions. As has been discussed in the English case, in the most of the reported events I was invited to follow the children. However, I was never invited to join them during the ‘free play’ activities in the classroom. The only inside activities filmed were during the painting process where Cindy, Jennifer and Jennifer asked me to take a picture of their dirty hands and the following three cases; Ian’s first play with the car placed on the painting, Jennifer’s play with the play dough and Allan’s play with the ribbons and pizza. These findings are in contrast with the findings of the outside area, where the children tended to look for me and invite me to join them on their journey with the bike or in their child initiated activities. The majority of children’s pictures were taken in the outside area while the routine cards report their perception of playing outside rather



than inside. It seems that children in the English case use more ‘mobile techniques’ to show their perspectives. This is explained as a matter that they have more freedom to move from one area to another.

In the English case it has been found, however, that in some episodes children withdraw from an adult directed activity such as circle time, especially when this takes place immediately after the children have recommended alternative possibilities such as in the case of ‘the twister’ (see Chapter 4, Section 4.3). It is the adult who rejects straight away those solutions playing a more authoritative role. This is an indicator of what Moss (2007a, 2007b) states as a lack of democratic values in the English curriculum.

To sum up, this study has found that children express their perceptions during an activity in a very complicated way, elaborating and examining all the parameters that could place them in trouble (Rutanen, 2007). The camera has been perceived in their hands as a means to speak about important issues of their lives, in a silent and safe way underlining Lenz Taguchi’s (2010) notion of the importance of the material turn in observation and documentation. The children do not only express their desire verbally and bodily but also transfer responsibility to me who is used as a transmitter of the message from the children’s world to the adults’ world.

## **5.2 How do practitioners encourage children’s initiatives? Misunderstanding and the distance between the ‘why’ and the ‘what’.**

A considerable amount of data in both countries shows that children do not always work according to adults’ expectations. However, these expectations have been found to determine the way that the practitioner encourages or discourages the children’s contribution to the programme. The adult’s attitude also varied between the two countries. For instance, practitioners in England were found to operate on a continuum from being fully supportive to completely ignorant or intrusive to the child’s activity. In the case of Greece a considerable amount of data has shown that every time a child tries to develop an activity that is not according to adult expectations, they are prevented, as long as it takes place during an organised activity or they are ignored as long as the child does not break any rule or create any fuss. The Greek practitioners seem to be more consistent in their insistence on the rules whilst the English practitioners’ approach seems to move as a pendulum between support, ignorance or prevention.

The ‘instability’ of the English practitioners approach in comparison with ‘stability’ of the Greek practitioners in the way they encourage or discourage the child is possibly correlated with the fact that in the English case the practitioners experienced the new reforms of the British government as they have been applied to the Early years provision through the Sure Start programme and more specifically to the EYFS (DfES, 2007). However, as has been discussed (in Section 4.4 Chapter 4) practitioners’ behaviour is not always caused by curriculum reforms but from a range of factors that unfortunately are not always immediately clear and may involve personal beliefs, social or cultural factors or possible disagreements between the staff that this study was unable to capture.

On the other hand, the stability of Greek practitioners is correlated with the fact that there have not been any new reforms for a long time. However the Greek practitioners mentioned during the interview that they did not feel confident and sure about the way they are working, while many times it has been found that they are not following the same tactics and principles when they work in the same group with more than one other practitioner (for instance as the events with ‘the Santa Claus’, ‘the wolf’, ‘the shoes’ shows).

What has been found to be common to both countries is the way the practitioners misunderstood the children’s actions and attitudes. It has been mentioned in previous sections that there is a significant distance in adults’ understanding between what the child is doing and why he is doing it. In these misunderstandings it has been found that they are embedded in the popular discourses about children and their abilities, correlated with Lenz Taguchi’s (2010) concept of ‘see’ and ‘observe’. The episodes about ‘the bike’ and ‘the fence’ (Chapter 4, Section 4.4) show how in the English case these discourses influence the way practitioners use observation in pedagogical documentation and to implement future planning. However, as Moss (2007a) has argued, ‘observation’ is not documentation.

In particular, the Greek case has been found to be more problematic in this respect, creating some concern about children’s rights and well being (see Appendix C.5§ 7). Similar misunderstandings have been found in the English case. The section about the fence and the bike (Chapter 4 Section 4.4) shows how the practitioners focus only on their expectation and planning misunderstanding what the children are trying to tell them when they explore, extend and experience something new. The practitioner’s observation is only focused on what has been planned and not on child’s initiated activities. It has been also found that practitioners in England report only those events that meet their expectations,

omitting activities that are going beyond the programme. For instance the case of Ian with the white van, the case of Jennifer with the milk and the jar and many episodes referring to the children's involvement with musical instruments are all ignored, interrupting and not extended.

There is also much data that shows children picking up musical instruments and trying to produce some music (for instance the case of Ian and John playing music sitting on the dogs). Although these events have come to the adult's attention and many of them take place during circle time or in front of an adult, none of them have been integrated into the following programme. The music that meets adult's expectations are only at the level of sitting and singing during circle time, with the notable exception of the 'clap your little hands' episode, which anyway was child initiated.

Lenz Taguchi (2010), challenging the segregation between 'hearing' and 'listening', is moving to the notion of 'seeing' and 'observing'. The meaning of 'seeing' is interrelated with understanding and it is obvious that in both cases understanding the child appears to be problematic. Lenz Taguchi has explained the difference between the two terms as result of ignorance of the third component which is related with the materials (the shoes, the musical instruments) and the discourses that are hidden behind and the lack of a reflective way of working.

### **5.3 Children's building picture of the curriculum – 'Εγώ θα το γκρεμίσω το σχολείο....'= I will ruin the school (Christos).**

Children's developing picture of the curriculum is not easily understandable without their comments. How can the researcher capture the child's perception of circle time when the child is silent during the whole process? For instance in the videos of 6<sup>th</sup> March (MOVO2227) 'circle time' or 10<sup>th</sup> March (MOVO225) 'circle time' through the whole activity Cindy is silent without singing or doing anything, while during the videos of the 'free play' she has a go at all the messy activities. Even if the child's attitude is different in both cases still her disposition is not clear and it is not easy either for adults to interpret this data. For this reason the focus in that case turns to the events that the child invites the researcher by herself (for instance the case of the 'wooden house', 'the sensory corner' and 'the empty water tray'). However, the events of 'the wooden house' and 'the sensory corner' show that the adult's contribution is missing; therefore what the child is doing is not extended into the next planning.

The events of the Greek case have shown that the adult's interpretation of much of the video data is challenged when the children make comments about the videos. It has been found that children's picture of the curriculum is strongly correlated with their relationship with the adult and the expectations of the adult and the setting. However, the children in Greek case have been in a strong disagreement with the applied programme and in the way the day care centre is being organised. Children's well-being is related with their desire not to attend the day care centre again and events that make them feel stressed. The three protagonists Maria, Christos and Panayiotis both together and alone reported to me, practitioners and friends their decision to destroy "this school" or not to come again. For instance in one case Maria, Dafni and Christos right after coming into the classroom in the morning started throwing items against the door saying 'Punch' (*Μπουνιά!*) (Appendix, C.5§8).

Starting from the case of Christos, he mentions many times (video, interviews, field notes, child's tours, 'Guess what I like game') that he does not like being in the day care centre and one day he will ruin the 'School'. There are data such as the video of MOVO6752 on 3<sup>rd</sup> March, when together with Panayiotis, he is trying to mess up the classroom by throwing items from the circle time area onto the floor (see Appendix C.5§9). However, Maria's and Christos' comments above confirm their mothers' worries that the children need something more from the day care centre and they do not receive it. For Maria being at home does not mean being with her mum. Staying at home means she is there again without her mother, as even during the evenings there is a baby sitter taking care of her. Maria's and Christos' decision that they will not come again to the day care centre is related with how they are spending their time, as their parents report that they are really demanding with the activities as at home they experience the use of real tools.

Panayiotis' decision not to come in the day care centre again has been reported verbally and practically. For instance there is one video when he invites me to depict how he destroys the school by driving and accelerating the trolley with strength hitting the wall and causing damage (8<sup>th</sup> December 'Look what I am doing!! I destroy the school' MOVO5983-MOVO5986). Finally, Panayiotis decides to leave the day care centre. His decision confirms the findings of the research and shows that every time he mentions to me his plan to destroy or going at home he was meaning that. When I met his mother she mentioned that Panayiotis recently refused to go to the day care centre. She called him on the telephone and Panayiotis was happy to speak with me on the phone (16<sup>th</sup> April, telephone discussion, Field notes).

To sum up, Maria, Christos and Panayiotis do not like to be in the day care centre. However they attend because their parents go to work every morning (children confirm this in their discussions). Maria and Panayiotis prefer being at home despite the fact that home means for them many hours without the whole family. Christos' and Maria's perception is more related with the activities of the day care centre. Maria said 'there is nothing important' for her to do in this place while Christos prefers to ruin it with his father's electrical rig. However, Panayiotis decision '*I don't want to go there*' become true refusing to go again to the day care centre. The other two children are still there however they are still thinking to leave (3<sup>rd</sup> April 'I will not come here again!!' Field notes).

#### **5.4 How is the meaning of child's participation defined in the setting?**

A considerable difference has been found between the two settings in relation to how the meaning of participation is perceived. The main differences are associated with the way practitioners are working with the children inasmuch with the applied programme or curriculum. In the Greek setting the practitioners based their programme on their personal experience, their previous knowledge wherever this is coming from (older colleagues and studies). They are not following any official framework and they decide the topic and the kind of activity that children will be involved in. For example, I participated in the meeting about the organization of the Christmas party. All the staff from all the children's groups were represented. The theme of the party, the costumes, the presents, and the decoration of the stage was based exclusively on adults' decisions while the children's responsibility was just to follow adults' instructions and directions. Even the choreography of the music was decided by the adults. It has been found that even if the children are occupied in their own activities, they have to stop (as in the events they have been mentioned in the previous chapters) and follow the practitioner's agenda (see for instance Appendix C.5§10).

In the English case the meaning of participation has a completely different context. During the interviews all practitioners mentioned that the way of working with the children is based on observation and documentation. The title of the worksheet 'Planning of Children's Interests' shows that the philosophy of the framework is based on the idea to work according to children's intentions. However, cases have been found where the child is interrupted from the activity that they are involved in due to the next programme. It has been found that what has been observed for one child is generated in the next planning for the rest of the children. In addition to this, what the child is doing in a child-initiated activity is not taken into consideration. It has been also found that although practitioners

notice children's lack of eagerness in particular areas (such as the writing table) or in painting activities, instead of changing the activity they increase it thus gradually excluding from the planning those children who are not keen on messy activities. Finally, it has been found that children's contribution to the mature activities is restricted or prevented, although the planning is resourced by natural and real materials, while children do not participate in the organisation of the areas - although they show such an intention.

However, numerous data in both countries shows that the practitioners do not deconstruct their personal discourses, and in the case of England the vague differences among their attitudes shows that from one side they are influenced by the EYFS trying to reach the goals but from the other side they have their personal or even relational (among colleagues and staff) discourses that matter. Dahlberg et al. (2007) advocate that both theory and practice should be taken into consideration in early years' pedagogy. It is apparent from the data of this study that in both countries the practitioners are influenced by the notion of the pre-sociological child and they do not interrogate their ideas during the 'present moment' in the shared meaning. Their personal discourses do not let them to see beyond misunderstanding what the children say and as such undermines the co-construction of their relationship.

The practitioners in the Greek case admit their lack of awareness. They claim that they do not know any other way of working, contending that this is the only way they have been taught; but they would like to change it as they do not feel satisfied (all practitioners interview; see also Bitou, 2006). Therefore being neglected by the central administrator they keep working according to the most 'safe- traditional well known way' for them, despite their awareness. Thus they work in the way they have been taught in the TEI and during their empirical approach.

In terms of the English case, although there has been considerable investment in the early years and the introduction of the EYFS from September 2008, these practitioners still appear to struggle to understand the notion of the active child. As Moss (2007a, 2007b) argues, it could be the way the curriculum framework (first Birth to Three Matters then the EYFS) is constructed following specific goals and aims that confuses the practitioners in their practice in connection with the old discourses of care as a private commodity. This is an indicator of the understanding of what Dahlberg et al. (2007) discuss as learning continuously and being reflective.

### **5.5 How have the children really been involved in an adult's invitation to join an activity?**

This final section will summarise children's strategies against adult's expectations. As it has been previously discussed, in both the cases of England and Greece circle time has been found to be problematic for the children. During this time children invent ways to withdraw from the activity, even using the researcher herself sometimes (Corsaro, 2003; 2005a). These strategies vary from bringing a toy with them or completely withdrawing from the activity. However, there are some episodes in England such as the 'clap your little hands' and the 'twister' events where children show their intention to change the activity. In some situations they manage to do this, while in others they are disappointed. Even though practitioners in both countries noticed that the children do not like the activity, they continually expected children to join in. Here it should be pointed out that in Greece the children's point of view about circle time is clearer than the children in England, due to the fact that children in Greece annotated the video data with verbal comments. Significantly, the children in England declined to watch any videos except the episode of 'clap your little hands'.

The children in Greece do not have the opportunity to choose whether or not to participate in an activity. However, the children in the study in England show their perspectives by not participating at all in the organised areas. Here the practitioners wanted to point children's attention towards particular activities and made casual plans in the peripheral areas such as the small table or eliminated the access to the outside area. For instance in the observation of Jennifer, Ian, and Arthur it has been noticed that none of them have been observed using the writing table. Despite the fact that in the 'Planning of the Children's Interest' reports the practitioners mention two reasons for continuing to organise the above areas; firstly they wanted most of the children to be involved in the rest of the activities that is why the two tables were equipped in this way and secondly to give the chance to the children that are about to leave this group and move to primary school so that the children are ready for that.

It has been found that during the circle time activity children invent ways to escape, demonstrating what Corsaro (2005a) describes as 'secondary adjustment'. In one video in the Greek case Christos tried 10 different ways to withdraw from the activity. Similar findings have been found also in the English case. However, the children in England have got the choice to decide to withdraw while in the Greek case the events during the circle time create concern for the way practitioners work with children. For example, in one

episode the disagreement between practitioner and the child was so strong and stressful that Christos and Aspasia searched for affection in Dafnis's arms saying:

**'Come here to make you my mum'**

*-Come here to make you my mum!!*

*Christos says to Dafni. Dafni keeps the two children in her arms and comforts them, as if being a mother. The practitioner is watching them*

(6<sup>th</sup> February 'Come here to make you my mum!' MOVO6571 video data)

Corsaro (2003, 2009) states that children's role play not only replicates parts of real life, but also fit individual's beliefs, ethics and apprehension. It is the place where children can relocate their agency by exercising power or comfort. In the flow of the play children collaboratively produce narratives or actions that have not been pre-planned but framed in the flow of the story or interaction. Hence, the above event was so stressful that the children affected by dignity (Johansson, 2005) do not show directly to the practitioner their need for care, but instead they seek it in their peer interaction and togetherness (see Chapter 2). Similar findings have not been made in the English case, although in the Greek case they are a significant indicator of the children's well being and matter of rights.

Further, in both countries children used me as a means to avoid the circle time (Corsaro 2003; 2005a). Both practitioners in Greece and England are aware of the situation; however both of them try to handle the situation in the same way by repeating the activity as it is. A practitioner in England mentions the Ofsted inspection, while practitioners in Greece argue that this is the only way they know and have been trained. The Ofsted inspection has been found problematic by Haw (2008: 196) using characteristically the title 'the dominant 'authoritative voice' of OFSTED'. It seems that practitioners' work is manipulated by the above inspection, an issue that should be examined more in future work.

Cameron (2007: 472) argues that in English early years' education and care the curricula and inspections work as external normative mechanisms of the regulatory frameworks, while practitioners create their own rules and norms in the setting (but in accordance with the moral and acceptable codes of the frameworks). For liberal countries such as England independence means to make individuals responsible for choice as part of modernisation. However, through video data she found many practitioners' views were related to the Foundation Stage curriculum (Cameron, 2007: 479).



It would be really interesting to acknowledge Laevers' (2005) concerns about the curriculum in early years in relation to goals when the mechanism of inspection and policy makers control how the curriculum is applied. Laevers states that in cases that the focus is only on the outputs and what is going to be assessed or defining first the goal and then the activity implemented strictly the goals of the curriculum, can be seriously problematic, loosing the balance with other aspects of the daily practice, as is the case with Ofsted in England.

In the new academic year following this study, practitioners in England stopped doing the circle time activity, while in Greece they kept doing it. The persistence in organising the circle time activity in Greece, despite the acknowledgement of the controversial issues, is interpreted as due to the lack of official curriculum and framework in connection with the lack of updated training. Practitioners in England are trained according to the philosophy and directions of the EYFS and are expected to change the activity following a child's interest in contradiction with practitioners in the Greek case who keep doing the activity because that is the only way they know (practitioners' interviews).

Of course a rich environment is significantly important. This is an element that has been supported by those who (Laevers, 2005; Pramling-Samuelsson, et al., 2006) defined the effectiveness of programmes such as Reggio Emilia, Highscope or EXE. It is the 'diversity' and the 'depth', that Laevers (2005) states that pedagogues should check every time. How the organised programme offers opportunities for experimentation, encouraging children's curiosity and spontaneous involvement is crucial. Here the Greek case is a bad example according to the children's perceptions: the day care is 'bad' (Christos), 'there is nothing important to do' (Maria), 'has got plastic materials' (Christos), 'deserve to be demolished' (Panayiotis) 'better to be at home' (Maria, Panayiotis, Christos).

However, the children in the English case have challenged the environment as well. The plethora of accessible materials, available all the time has been an issue, as the episodes with the bikes show. Additionally, children challenge the 'boring' adult's planning by not participating at all, or by following their own agenda, for instance preferring the water in the water twister rather than in the water tray. The fence also has been challenged as an obstacle that eliminates children's experience and choices in relation to the activities.

Laevers (2005: 23) also discusses ‘the process of representation’ as an ability to represent mentally something that is not in front of you at the moment. The example, for instance with Dafni as a mother who comforts Christos and Anastasia from the practitioner’s attitude, shows strongly how Dafni recalls the role of mother by pretending and offering what a mother usually gives; ‘hugs and comfort’, because at that moment Christos and Anastasia simply need hugs and care. The example also with Ian and the traffic signs shows how the child re-presents his every day experience when he comes from home to school and via versa (observation, practitioner’s interview, mother’s interview). This ability to re-present according to Laevers (2005) should be seen as essential aim in education. In fact following Corsaro’s and Rogoff’s advice is exactly where children’s agency and contribution to the culture can be found, it is exactly where children show us how they understand the world sharing at the same time the experience with adults. Hence, ‘original’ experience is important but also what the child is doing as an ‘act’ (Laevers, 2005).

But how sensitive are practitioners to this meaning of re-presentation? The findings in both countries are rather disappointing. It is what practitioner Martha in the English case names as a ‘missed opportunity’ while the practitioners in the Greek case did not reflect on this aspect at all. As Laevers (2005: 23) states, ‘the act of expression is at the same time an act of impression’ meaning that the child is telling us something at the moment which re-present a reality and it is up to the adult to grasp those re-presentations and give the child tools and opportunities for further extension and expression. For instance, in the above paradigm with Dafni as a ‘mother’, the practitioner ignored the children’s dispositions and continued her programme while the children did not have any other choice but to please her. Here the children are following adults’ expectations but their well being is fragile and the practitioner ignores that.

The above episode relates particularly to the sixth element that Laevers (2005: 24) defines as important in all curriculums and planning: ‘the communication, interaction and dialogue’. According to Emilson and Folkesson (2006), it is not the child who does not make any effort but it is the adult who ignores child’s effort to understand, to satisfy and to inform the practitioner. The episode with Jennifer and the play dough is a strong example here and it is clear how finally the child trying to follow adult’s agenda is missing her way of learning. It is not that the child is not learning, it is that the child is learning what the adult wants (to feel the sticky hands) and not to feel the sticky car like in case of Ian in the same example. It is then where the faulty ‘present moment’ in the sharing of meaning

appears (Stern, 2004). The child participates but the engagement is problematic as the child is not spontaneous.

Additionally, if observation is an element for reflection, understanding, dialogue, communication and interaction rather than just for evaluation (Laevers, 2005) then here the question is what the adult is observing. It is the question of “why” the child did what she did. It is where the whole truth can be captured in relation with all the above five elements highlighted by Laevers (2005). For the Greek pedagogues observation is related only with obeying the rules. For the English case, observation is the element that informs the next planning. But how? Sitting and watching the children keeping notes without interacting when they ask for intervention in the here and now situation? Or filming the child not in natural situations, such as:

### **Snack Time**

*‘Arthur? Would you like milk or water?’, ‘milk’, ‘Hold on Carla!! My camera was not working...now you can repeat’, ‘Arthur! Would you like milk or water?’, ‘Milk!’ Arthur repeated.*

(10<sup>th</sup> June, ‘Snack time’ Field Notes).

The practitioners wanted to show in the consultation with Arthur’s mother that her child has well developed language and understanding at ‘a very good level for his age’ (practitioner Caroline). Hence, they created a ‘technical’ situation to prove that the child can answer ‘milk!’ But when the child does not giving the correct oral answer, as in case of Ian then they remind the child that they have to speak:

*‘Ian would you like milk or water?’ Ian indicates the milk ‘say milk!’ the practitioner said to him. Ian does not say milk but points to the milk. ‘Can you say milk please?’ the practitioner emphasises. Ian shrinks his body again pointing to the milk with his finger’*

(12<sup>th</sup> April, Field Notes).

Language acquisition is very important in the EYFS (DfES, 2007) and is emphasised in many ways through the whole document. Unfortunately, it seems that the strategies of the practitioners are not consistent with the meaning of ‘skilful communicator’. For them Ian should answer verbally ‘milk or water’ because in September he will be attending the first class of the primary school and has to talk and not use gestures. The final section will

discuss the findings of this study on two levels: the level of misunderstanding and the level of participation as a 'choice'. The word 'choice' in inverted commas demonstrates the different meanings that it may have.

## **5.6 Implications for Pedagogy**

### *Misunderstandings over children's languages*

The misunderstandings between the child and the practitioner in both the Greek and the English cases show firstly that practitioners are strongly orientated by their expectations and beliefs (MacNaughton, 2004) and secondly with Johansson's (2009) concern that teachers have to be trained to develop a concept of morality and be able to recognise them in association with the children's meaning every time they deliver the curriculum. For instance, Johansson (2002) has found that practitioners tend to prevent children from doing something every time their values are under threat. The prevailing dominance of adult values, for instance 'not climbing on objects', as a matter of safety, does not let the practitioners see what the child wants to say every time, creating a distance between adult and child worlds and threatening children's rights and participation.

Corsaro (2005a; 2009) argues that children at this age are fully aware of the danger and ask the researcher to intervene every time they feel they are in danger. It seems that such an approach is a reflection of the adult's beliefs about security that is transferred to the child (Burman, 2001) and in both cases the tension is common. Both perceptions lead us to the roots of 'the competent or not' child which unfortunately in both cases is founded on the pre-sociological notion of the child - creating many issues about children's rights. Here Emilson and Johansson's (2009) point about the way that adults (teachers) communicate and negotiate with the child changes the relationship, is highly significant.

Löfdahl (2006) claims that there is urgent need in EYEC to work according to ethics. What pedagogues in both cases appear to have misunderstood is the need to integrate the meaning of ethics in relation to the context. The ethics here do not have the meaning of 'care', or 'see', 'understand' as proposed by Moss and his colleagues. The ethics here are based on one side, the pedagogue's side, keeping the formal meaning (curriculum) and ignoring the informal meaning (child's, parent's perception). For instance in the Greek case, practitioners generalise the previous years experience to this years children by not letting them using scissors, play in the garden, go under the table and get dirty, although the majority of parents interviewed state that they would like their children to have this

experience in the day care centre. Additionally, in the 'Wolf', 'Santa Claus', 'Chain' example and so on they generalise and apply a general belief to the activities of the group of children that have different perceptions and values. As Löfdahl (2006) notes, the mutuality in the meaning should start from understanding firstly peer culture and then seeing it in association with the formal ethics such as curriculum, parent's expectations and so on. This proposal is due to the fact that peer culture is not stable and can easily change depending from the context and those who participate in (Löfdahl, 2006; Corsaro, 2003, 2005a, 2005b).

Playing with the words 'who', 'how', 'what' and 'why', Haw (2008: 202) states that in the 'listening to' process it is crucial to consider issues of who and what is heard and criticised what and how children are listened to. Thomson (2008: 4) states that listening means 'listening to things that are unsaid and /or not what we expect' moving beyond the universal voice and seeking the diverse one. Laevers' (2005) statement is that the curriculum itself can be harmful and not helpful at all especially in cases such as England and Greece that is strongly orientated by discourses related with the age and desirable goals. For instance the EYFS (DfES, 2007) is divided into tables indicating instruction for each age from birth to five.

What concerned Bennett (2005) about the curriculum; the notion of an 'open framework' that can easily been misunderstood by pedagogues in relation to observation, was found in the case of England. In many examples the practitioners just sat by a child keeping notes on the observation cards, forgetting to interact. Viewing the video data of the English case it has been found that practitioners are not so interactive with children during an activity and, in some cases even if the child talks to them, there is no response. The example with Ian and the bike, with Jennifer and spaghetti are good examples, together with many others.

Viewing the videos, practitioners Martha and Anna noticed that pedagogues are not aware of whether or not to intervene in a child's activity and as a result their role in some cases is ignorant or involves too much intervention. It has also been noticed that traditional activities such as role play, theatrical play, drama, dancing and even group activities like group games are not part of the planning and as such are not encouraged every time any child initiated them.

It seems that activities that are strongly orientated towards skills are overshadowing activities strongly connected with what are traditional early years' activities, such as dramatic play. Children in Greece have been noticed playing more often as a group, many times initiating their own group game (i.e the wolf, the fishman, the cooks) the collective notion appears stronger in Greece rather than in England. Two explanations could be found, firstly children's demystification of the tools provided (case of Christos and Maria) in association with the general lack of materials, in contrast with English case where there was a plethora of toys, plastic material, puzzles etc. Hence the only way for the Greek children to spend a good time in the day care centre was to invent activities using their imagination and transferring and sharing their experience from home into their peer play in the setting. Similarly, parents report that children are involved in dramatic and pretend play quite often at home with them, siblings and friends.

This could also be interrelated with the fact that the children in Greece know each other well and they have created strong bonds, due to the programme that is more traditional and provides the children with more traditional activities (Bennett, 2005). They also attend every day and have known each other for a number of years. For example, the practitioners in the Greek case reported that one of the main expectations when they apply the programme is 'children's social and cognitive development' and for this reason they regularly organised a range of group games in order for the children to socialise. The acquisition of skills thus is common in both countries. In contrast, in England child's the personal well being is more often focused on, rather than social development (only Arthur's mother states that for her the setting is a good opportunity for Arthur to socialise, as he is an only child). It seems however that the notion of collectivism is rather weaker in the English case in contrast with the Greek case. This is a danger for the principles of democracy.

Corsaro (2003) states that 'secondary adjustment' demands strong feeling of membership. It is the adults themselves who do not let the children discuss and negotiate, rather than the children. It is the orientation and the structure of the programme which does not afford the cultivation of interaction and dialogue amongst the members (Bennett, 2005). For instance in the English case, new children arrive everyday with the practitioner trying to get used to them and the children get used to each other, the practitioners and the programme. Eventually the children become familiar with the space but not with the human resources - this automatically isolates the individual child although they are surrounded by more than 20 people. The lack of free provision for everyone in the English case influence the way

children, parents and family are experience the services. For instance many parents report that cannot afford to send everyday their child in the centre although the child at home is very keen on coming more often.

For Dahlberg and Moss (2005), the lack of universal and free early years education and care for all children make those places neither loci of politics nor of ethics. It is like a coffee shop where you meet some people once, but you are not sure if you are going to meet them again the next time you are going there, only the waitress – pedagogues are the same. It is also problematic that children do not know the names of the other children. In the mornings during the ‘hello song’ or ‘good bye song’ the practitioners introduce the name of children but the video data shows that children are not keen on these kinds of activities, children do not like circle time.

To be fair to the practitioners, it must be difficult to work in a setting where you never know which children may attend in advance and how many days they may attend. It has been noticed, for example, that the practitioners in the English case do not introduce the new comers except at the time of the ‘hello and goodbye song’ which is a routine that takes place everyday, anyway. Additionally what the first thing you were doing being in a place that you have not visit since a long time? I guess that you start looking around to see what has been changed, exploring. The structure of the programme in the English case does not let the children and practitioner build up a closer relationship and as Skånfors, Löfdahl and Hägglund (2009) state, in building up relationships the time and the space should be captured as significantly important.

In contrast, children in Greece checked to see who was there during breakfast time, during the time they were in the lift, during the time they had arrived in their classroom, wondering or asking each other where their friends are, guessing that maybe slept a bit more or maybe they are sick. It should be admitted that the Greek programme, despite the fact that it is strongly traditional, in fact appears to be more collective encouraging the children to care about each other. Of course the role of the pedagogues is more authoritative. However the discipline notion should be seen in interrelation with the more humanitarian needs of action. It is the meaning of empathy and justice that children in Greek case cultivate in their peer culture. The example, for instance, of the child-mother who comforts the other children after the practitioner’s authoritative behaviour makes the children share the same problem and commiserate together, supporting the development of mutuality and a shared meaning. A mother always offers comfort; according to dominant

discourses a child is never able to act in this way, hence they can support each other only if they can act as if they are ‘mothers’.

Consequently, it is not only the principles, values, the pedagogical guidelines, the content and outputs of a curriculum (Bennett, 2005) that are important in early years’ education and care, it is the orientation, structural and interactional support that makes the differences. Despite the fact that the EYFS recognises the competent child, emphasising well being and respect, in fact the lack of universal early years’ education and care for everybody, does not really solve the problem, and can even make the programme more harmful as children do not have those opportunities to construct friendship within the time they are in the day care centre. In contrast, the Greek case provides free provision but parents, practitioners and children’s point of view shows the need for governmental reforms.

Here it is worthwhile pointing out that in both countries it was found that the pedagogues applied activities without considering the differences between learning how to use a tool from understanding the utilisation of the tool. For instance, the practitioners invited the child to an activity in order for them to learn something (feeling the texture or learning about the wolf) but what is missing is, as Lave and Wenger (1991:101) argue, ‘understanding the technology of practices is more than learning to use the tools’. This understanding, according to Lave and Wenger is fundamental for participants to understand the cultural historical factors and as such to participate in the reproduction. What Lave and Wenger (1991:102) argue is that learning does not take place only by moving from one activity to another (and as such giving the sense that the individual have the choice to decide) but participation constitutes involvement in ‘information flows and conversation, in a context in which they can make a sense of what they observe and hear’. It is the ‘transparency’ of the activity (production and understanding). Significantly, in neither of the two cases has been such a notion of the meaning of participation been observed. This leads to the next implication for the pedagogy which is related to ‘participation as a choice’.

#### *Participation as a ‘Choice’*

The meaning of ‘choice’ as it has been operated and perceived in the both countries is different. The choice in the Greek case is clearly adult orientated and children are aware of that – ‘Miss Anastasia will scold me if I make a hat all by myself’ or ‘do you think is right to play the wolf at all the time?’ (Maria’s comments see Chapter 4 Section 4.2). The young



person knows that she cannot make her own hat. However, she knows how and she even knows that it is her teacher who does not let her. Hence she knows that Miss Anastasia exercises power towards her and she fights against this in her own way, through her friends (Corsaro, 2005a, 2003, 2000). This can be the reason why the children in Greek case were more talkative and spontaneous in their comments. Children in the Greek case are aware of where the power is coming from- from the adults. They know that they do not have any other choice but to sit on the mattress and sing or follow the instructions of their teacher- they can find out where the unfair treatment is coming from (Johansson, 2005). It seems that the discontinuity that exists between the two domains the public and the private (family) has made children experience waiting not to become older so as to have access to a certain activities (James, 2005) but waiting to pass the time at the day care centre so as to have access at home.

Parents, on the other hand, are aware of this discontinuity and as Panayiotis' mother said: "I hope in the future he will forgive me and he will understand that I didn't have any other choice". Hence, the implication is for the Greek Government to review the role and the principles, the inherited values that the day care centres represent to reframe their role. It seems that the lack of official framework of values beyond the notion of working mothers renders those institutions as anachronistic almost forgotten by the state, effecting the well being not only of the children but also of the parents and practitioners, transferring the responsibility only to the staff (as parents complain about the staff and not about the governmental policy).

The meaning of choice in connection with participation in the English case seems to be in the child's hands, . However, there are many hidden factors that influence a child's choice. This does not mean that the child is less competent. It is through the hidden way that practitioners exercise power and control towards a child's choice that the individual cannot realise the adult's intention. The staff repeatedly organise the peripheral corners in a casual way to centralise children's 'decision' to sit and get involved in the main activities, thus the practitioners' are focusing organisation and interaction on their expectations and this factor is the main pitfall.

Arguably, this is more dangerous than the Greek case, because for the child in the English case it is not clear whether or not they are aware of the adult's real arrangements and intentions. However, the child is an agent and orientated by her personal interest and even if a practitioner makes her own choice the child herself can make the choice to

participate, or not. The drawback of this approach is that it tends to exclude the child from the group, putting labels on them due to their personal choice (Vandenbroeck, 2006a). Hence on one side there is the case of Ian, Arthur and Allan who are waiting patiently to get access to their favourite activity but there are also cases like Jennifer, Cindy and Stefanie who are engaged in the activity trying to contribute with their own way to the programme. Here, it seems that there is gender division that indicated the need for future work.

There is a need of what Lave and Wenger (1991:102-103) term as 'transparency' in learning, with emphasis on 'visibility' and 'invisibility' of a practice. The hidden adult orientation over the child's choice is a reflection of application of the technical and goal directed EYFS, which reveals an undemocratic way of working. Moss's (2007a) claims that the lack of references to democracy explicitly in the programme show that there is overemphasis on the desirable outcomes of the British government who want to invest in the future citizens under the cover of 'the participation agenda' as a democracy (Chapter 2). It should be argued here that both cases are problematic for different reasons and this goes back to what Moss questions - how we think the children are and what early years' education and care is for.

For instance, taking the example of circle time that has been found as the most problematic activity in both countries, it could be viewed under the lens of the writing of Sherridan and Pramling (2001) as a presentation of the collective and democratic way where (in Swedish society) upbringing takes place. However Emilson and Johansson (2009) found that it is exactly where the adult is exercising the demand for obedience, adaptation and formation. Children's strategic way of avoiding the directed activities should be seen as an answer to the adult's strategy of commanding discipline. Cameron, (2007) also states that the meaning of independence is correlated with the kind of welfare that is provided. For instance, in liberal countries the individual choice is private and not states' accountability. In England Cameron (2007) argues that the discourses about choice and independence and the value of the competent child emerged from the National Curriculum and the Declaration of Children's Rights (UNCRC, 1989). However, in the case of children under three years old and more specifically in the EYFS, the meaning of independence is connected with a vulnerability and the need of those children to have strong relationship with an adult 'key worker' (see also Elfer, 2007). For those children independence is translated as being supported and assisted. However, Cameron (2007) states that across the

countries the meaning of independence varied. For English participants choice is a mean of independence while independence playing significant role in the process of learning.

The English case shows a microcosm of how the children (Ian, Allan and Jennifer) because of their choices (not to participate in the organised activities) are excluded from the adult's attention. It is the choice itself that excludes the child and put labels them. The Greek case appears similar, with Christos, Maria and Panayiotis's ways of decision making being labelled by the practitioners. Each of the children has been characterising by adults according to their choices and attitudes: Christos - 'the naughty boy' ('who is opens the door and leaves'), Maria - 'the selfish, complainer' ('who is a spoilt girl') and Panayiotis - 'the silent boy' ('who obeys respectfully'). In the English case expressions such as 'this is Jennifer' or 'this is all about Arthur' were used many times demonstrating that the adult already has a cartography of children's interest in her mind and follows it strictly without seeking to capture events that may move beyond the expected element - a 'messy' or 'not messy' child, for instance. This means that the adult is reproducing the same element while the child is not encouraged when he intends to participate in something new.

In the practitioner's discourse the child is doing always the same thing, such as Ian is playing with the bike but practitioner ignores his agency and the kind of learning he gains during that activity (Rogoff, 2003; Corsaro, 2005). In fact the practitioner has problematized his habits, for instance 'Ian does not like messy activities'. However, the adult is not tending to change or replace the activity, instead she focuses on those children who are involved in the activity leaving aside those who are not - 'he does not like the messy activity so that is fine'. The reflection on the activity stops there in the name of respecting the 'child's interest'. Is it really 'respect' or further, is it really the 'child's best interest'? Why then is the same child on other occasions involved in messy activities without anybody observing him, as the video data shows?

It is not that the adult does not see the problem, the adult in all these cases is aware that children have challenged the adult's programme by not participating. In fact the pedagogue does not want to solve the problem, as long as the child 'does not make any fuss' (practitioner Martha). The English pedagogues are not at all involved in a 'hunting position' of child's involvement in activity which basically leads to Johansson's concerns (2009) about the adult's ability to change their conception of what it means to be a 'competent' child. Rogoff (2003) explicitly and implicitly argues that without sharing there

is no participation and contribution. Leaving the child alone may lead to the opposite extremes of misunderstanding and isolation (Bennett, 2005).

### **Reflecting and Looking Forward**

*‘Out of the dance you are always claiming that you know how to dance’*

*(Greek popular proverb)*

My experience and reflection about the both settings in Greece and England have brought me to some questions about the limitations of my research. First of all, my position as a pre-school teacher and researcher may have influenced the flow of my research. In the chapter on methodology, I have described a number of issues related with ethics as a matter of my profession as both pre-school teacher and researcher. I could say that for the English case I am not fully aware of the culture and may be this is one of the limitations of my research. My role as researcher is defined both by my culture and profession. I was fully aware of the culture in the Greek case as I had worked there previously, as a native speaker and having the same culture. I did not have the same acknowledgement in the English case. I was a professional but not qualified in working in the English setting. I could spot many similarities but here I found challenges to fully understand the culture, due to different beliefs involved at the same time. In contrast in the Greek case I am a member of staff there, a researcher and a Greek national, being fully aware of the context. However, I am not sure to what level I did not exercise any power on participants’ decision and way of participating in my research.

Reading again and again my thesis I notice that I have been overcritical some times with the staff. Clearly I can see myself taking the part of the children. Analysing the data I placed myself many times in their position and I was puzzled. What if I were in the position of the practitioner? Would I have responded in the same way to the child? In the past I used to act and interact with children in the same way as the practitioners did during this study. Doing research in the way practitioners were working I saw myself before starting this PhD and maybe that was a reason for being critical. In fact I am critical with myself as a pre-school teacher rather than with the staff. And now? What shall I do now? There is a Greek proverb saying that “out of the dance you are always claiming that you know how to dance”. What is going to happen when you are starting dancing? It is now two days since I have started working again with children as a practitioner. I have started keeping diary and reflecting all the knowledge I have received and I am now ready to see how I can work with children seeing them as having the right to create curriculum as

practitioner-researcher and not only as a researcher. Here there are more challenges. During my research I paid attention to the children's point of view without focusing on the practitioner's perceptions. I was not in the position to change the practice. I was in the difficult position to criticize practitioners (and myself as a practitioner) more than the child. Now starting working again I have to compromise and combine all these factors and this can inform future research. Next Monday on the 6<sup>th</sup> September the children are coming to the day care centre. The Greek children that were part of my research are going to attend now the last class of the day care centre. They are going to be there. This means that I am going to meet them under different lens, the lens of the practitioner. They are not going to be in my group but they are going to be there. How am I going to feel? How they are going to feel? This is a challenge as well.

The number of the children participating in my research is another limitation. There were only two settings, one in England and one in Greece. I do not know if the similar events are happening in other settings in the same country. Is it the same, different and to what extent? Additionally, the number of children involved was not many and after analysis of the data I showed that there is a gender connection. There are two boys in England, two in Greece, and one girl in England and Greece. I do not know if these children's perceptions are correlated with their gender. This is challenging my work for future research. Additionally, I did not spend the whole year in both settings. These findings are a snapshot and not reflection of the whole academic year. Another issue for me is the methods that have been used. To what extent can they work in a different context? In the chapter of methodology, it has been posed already a number of limitations on the used methods. In future, the same methods are useful to be seen in practices. The table of the Mosaic of the events could be used as an observation tool gathering the events in chronological order? It could be effective tool to capture children's best interest while I am working with them in the EY setting? And what about practitioners? Are they are going to share the same beliefs as me or I will need to compromise my different now educational background with their own? How easy will this be?

This work has not stopped, yet I rather feel that now it is starting. The findings also recommend that the "silent" child has to be seen more in depth. Why do these children prefer to remain in silent? The findings of this study suggest that children avoid talking about events that worry them. The case of Panayiotis and Ian ( the infant room), the transition experience of Maria as been described by her mother, the children's refusal to talk about mean attitudes suggests that there is a need to see further how the child can be

encouraged to talk about issues that concern them. Many parents in the Greek case mentioned that their children avoided talking about the day care centre at home and this makes it difficult for them to follow the programme and the activities of the particular centre. However, they mentioned that children were keen to talk about their friends, the researcher and events such as the snow. In future work on children's perspectives about the day care centre should investigate what it means for the child to remain in silence and whether or not the adult should worry about this silence. Panayiotis' mother having experience her son's refusal to go to the day care centre cannot explain why the child took that decision, as he refused to explain the reason, only reporting his decision. The child has decided to "remain in silence" and what his mother was worrying was the fact that she did not know where the problem was. The child's experience as being transferred from home to the early years' setting, and vice versa, should be seen more in depth.

A key question is therefore how can parents and practitioners incorporate this experience into the children's curriculum? I have already started to observe my niece, now that she is 2.2 years old, both at home and in the day care centre. The child is video filmed and asked about her comments. These videos are being viewed by both parents, the child, the grandparents while in the day care centre the same child will be observed and being asked about her perceptions.

Another area of future research could be the practitioners' working conditions and experiences. Many of the Greek practitioners mentioned issues of exhaustion. The findings of the English practitioners also puzzled me as their perceptions are significantly different regarding their way of working (see for instance Practitioner Martha and Anna). It is questionable whether or not these beliefs are a matter of class, culture or training, or a matter of exhaustion as both Martha and Anna were not with children at all times while Caroline, Betty and Sarah were, on daily basis. Additionally in the English case, it would be useful to investigate the role of Ofsted and evaluate to what extent it determines practitioner's design and way of working with young children.

To sum up, seeking to try and understand child's perceptions is a complicated and complex process demanding from all adults not only to 'see' and 'hear' but also to 'understand' children's actions and reactions. I may be critical of practitioners and the political reforms but I am more critical with myself when in all the previous years I was not reflecting and changing the way I was working. What is important for all of us is to see what is working practically and theoretically, how we can respect children's right to participate, parent's

values and beliefs and how we can follow them by interpretative reproduction, together with what we knew and what we live now and how we can change in the future.

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## **Appendix A**

### **Documentation related to Chapter 3**

**Table 3.4 Flow Chart**

Maria, 3 <sup>rd</sup> December: Flow Chart			
Duration and Method	Time	Description	Content Theme
11min-MOVO5920-video Child's comments: Yes Mothers comments: Yes Practitioner comments: Yes	It is before snack time. The Santa Claus is coming in the class suddenly.	Maria seeing the Santa Claus is leaving the group and is coming behind my back hiding herself from him,	Santa Claus: Maria is scared and petrified, practitioner is upset with the other member of staff
<b>Field notes:</b> Child' comments: Yes Mothers comments: Yes Practitioner comments: Yes	I was keeping notes, Maria was playing in the grocery shop, practitioner was preparing some crafts	Maria is coming in front of practitioner saying "I am not going to come again to this school and I want to go home now!" practitioner is telling that she can not go as it is rain.	Maria wants to go home announcing her decision not to come again.
<b>1min MOVO5914</b>	Maria is asking me if I have got an umbrella. I am giving her my umbrella. She is taking it and she goes to play in the single mattress	Maria, Aspasia and Dafni are using the umbrella as a door. Anastasios and Panayiotis are going knocking the door. When the two boys said "come out there is a dog" the three girls are leaning aside the umbrella start running	Child's initiative activity, not taking into consideration from practitioner, although she is in the classroom
<b>6minMOVO5944-47 video</b>  Child' comments: No Mothers comments: Yes Practitioner comments: Yes	It is During craft after snack time	Practitioner is asking children to go for crafting. Maria said that she does not want. However, she goes and sits on the chair seeing the rest of the group going for crafting. Maria starts pinching Dafni while the rest of the group is too noise fighting for different reasons. Practitioner scolds them for doing such a noise. However, by the time practitioner is handing out the equipment children are fighting	Every time practitioner is about to hand out some material children are fighting with each other or demand and nagging about their turn.  Question: Why Maria joins while initially does not want to join them? Why she pinch Dafni? She participates but she seems to be upset.

**Table 3.5 Event with the wolf**

<b>6<sup>th</sup> Event with the wolf</b> <b>10FG MOVO6624'Wolf-wolf...! Are you here?'</b> Maria and Panayiotis		
Requesting the game  Silent	Maria is requesting to play the game of the 'wolf'. 'That one with the wolf!' she is telling loudly to practitioner.....  Panayiotis initially is silent.....	Parents comments: he does not like the game
Moving and participating	However he is moving doing and following adult's directions while he is singing the song. Maria is moving as well singing and following the directions of the game	She is pretended that she is scared
Fighting Complaining  Silent	Maria and Aspasia start fighting during the game Maria is turning her back to practitioner refusing to talk and playing.  Panayiotis is silent looking at the others	Child's comments: I was not fighting with my friend I was tired
Guess what I like game: 'Can you understand that I don't like at all this game?' (Maria)	<b>Practitioners comments:</b> they are fascinated about the game but last year Panayiotis was scared <b>Researcher's comments:</b> Maria asked from practitioner to play that game but her comments and the "guess what I like game" states that she doesn't not like it	<b>Child's comments :</b> I don't like that game , (Maria), ' I don't like it' (Panayiotis)

**Table 3.6. Table of Analysis based on Rogoff's theory, the example of "broken down car"**

Name: Christos	Theme as defined by the child: 'broken down car'	Methods and Duration Video26 <sup>th</sup> of January- 'The broken car'MOVO6485-MOVO6486 1 min	Child's initiatives: Yes	Adult's initiatives :No	
Prior events:	Practitioner is sitting on the table preparing the next worksheet and Christos is playing on the grocery shop trying to find something on the plastic big bag. He is keeping on his hands a car and he is coming close to me telling: 'Look it is a bit broke down....I will destroyed completely in order to fix it...Take it in your video!'		Code: <b>mature activities-real materials</b> Identify ↓ Fixing		
Description of the event	<p><i>Christos</i> is showing me the car and he throws it down. "I broke it down =το έσπασα" he is telling me. Then he is kneeling down to see the car. He turns it around and he removes the mechanical part he found into the car. He is giving a last look to see if he can found anything else and he is going to his teacher saying: "Look what I found!=κοίτα τι βρήκα!!"</p> <p>"What is that? Where this comes from?τι είναι αυτό – από τι είναι αυτό;"</p> <p>-from the car =Από το αυτοκίνητο</p> <p>Christos is answering.</p> <p>-ok give to me because those things are dangerous for you. Bring me also the car. You should not play with that (practitioner is telling grasping the piece)</p> <p>Christos is going and brings the broken car to her.</p>		Code: <b>Throwing</b> ↓ <b>Exploring</b> ↓ <b>Reporting</b> ↓ <b>Interrogated by pract.</b> ↓ <b>Preventing-Practitioner</b>	<b>Function in Context:</b> The child is throwing the car to see the inside part. After exploring, finding one piece is going to practitioner showing to her. Practitioner interrogates Christos and is keeping the item saying to him that this is dangerous. She is asking for Christos to bring her all the parts of the broken car. Thus Christos intention to fix the car is not accomplished.	
Connection with other events:	Video trolley 1,  Video trolley 2	Christos comments on the  Mother's comments Practitioners comments	Field notes: fixing the grocery shop Christos comments		
Child's comments: “ I will destroyed completely in order to fix it”		Practitioner comments: I don't like children throw items and often I am asking them don't do that. If I had seen that video before I would not let him to break it down.....	Parent's comments: “Look grandpa....nice the tractor you brought me but.....it is not a real one it is a plastic and it is better to throw it away!”	Researcher's comments: If we connect Christos's comment with his mother's easily we can understand that for Christos whatever is plastic is not real one. He has got a clear idea of what is real and what not.	
Q1: Does the child participate actively?  It is child initiative and he wants the researcher to capture the event on the	Q2: How the child expresses his/her desire during the activity: -he said his intention	Q3: How does practitioner encourage or discourage?  Discourage him keeping the piece saying that	Q4: Children's building picture of the curriculum  The providing materials are plastic	Q5: How the meaning of child's participation is defined on the day care centres:  Children's participation as long as is	Q6: Children are using the providing recourses according to adult's expectations or they develop activities nothing to do with the adult's initial planning?  The child here is working not according to adult's expectations Practitioner interrogating the child is disrupted his activity destroyed his intention to fix the item.



<i>camera</i>	<i>-he is throwing, looking and turning up and down the car exploring the function of the car.</i>	<i>“this is dangerous”</i>	<i>and the child does not have many choices in problem solving situations. Hence the child decided to create a problem solving by breaking down and fixing the car again</i>	<i>related with activities during the free time is not taking into consideration. The adult is intervene as long as there issues of safety and security</i>	
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**Table 3.7 Table of Analysis based on Rogoff's theory**

Name	Theme as defined by the child	Methods and Duration	Child's initiatives	Adult's initiatives
<b>Prior events:</b>				Code:
<b>Description of the event</b>	<i>Description</i>		Code:	Function in context
<b>Connection with other events:</b>	<i>Methods and description</i>			
Child's comments		Practitioner comments	Parents comments	Researcher's comments:
Q1: Does the child participate actively?	Q2: How the child expresses his/her desire during the activity	Q3: How does practitioner encourage or discourage?	Q4: Children's building picture of the curriculum	Q5: How the meaning of child's participation is defined on the day care centres
Q6: Children are using the providing resources according to adult's expectations or they develop activities nothing to do with the adult's initial planning?				

**Table 3.8: The mosaic of the events**

<b>1<sup>st</sup> Day</b>	<b>Video data</b>	<b>Child's comments</b>	<b>Parent's comments</b>	<b>Practitioner's comments</b>	<b>Field notes</b>	<b>Child's photos</b>
<b>2nd day</b>	<b>Video data</b>	<b>Guess what I like game</b>	<b>Building blocks</b>	<b>Parent's comments</b>	<b>Child's comments</b>	<b>Practitioner's comments</b>
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> day</b>	<b>Video data</b>	<b>Child's directed tour</b>	<b>Child's comments</b>	<b>Guess what I like game</b>		
<b>4<sup>th</sup> day</b>	<b>Video data</b>	<b>Audio data</b>	<b>Children's comments</b>	<b>Child's pictures</b>		

**Table 3.9: Table of Analysis based on Rogoff's theory**

Name	Theme as defined by the child	Methods and Duration	Child's initiatives	Adult's initiatives
<b>Prior events:</b>				Code:
<b>Description of the event</b>	<i>Description</i>		Code:	Function in context
<b>Connection with other events:</b>	<i>Methods and description</i>			
Child's comments	Practitioner comments	Parents comments	Researcher's comments:	
Q1: Does the child participate actively?	Q2: How the child expresses his/her desire during the activity	Q3: How does practitioner encourage or discourage?	Q4: Children's building picture of the curriculum	Q5: How the meaning of child's participation is defined on the day care centres
Q6: Children are using the providing recourses according to adult's expectations or they develop activities nothing to do with the adult's initial planning?				

**Table 3.10 : Content long in Material Culture , (short overview)**

Event	Description-Function in Context	Adult's Comments
<p>1. 24NG fieldnotes Priming stressful event is missing for ethical issues (Panayiotis)</p> <p>2. 26NG field notes 'Are you scared of the wolf?'</p> <p>3. 28NG field notes breakfast time 'Look! The wolf is moving'</p>	<p>1 and 2. The child is coming and shows to researcher the Red Book with the sound of the wolf. The child is taking also pictures</p> <p>3. Practitioner from another group is telling to the children who were not eating their breakfast that the wolf from the picture on the wall is about to come -Did you hear that???? Look!!! He is trying to be moved from the wall?(practitioner from another group to her children) Panayiotis is asking researcher if the wolf is really about to come</p>	<p><b>Parents comments:</b> <i>I am so upset with this foolish story of the wolf that is coming and eating the bad kids!</i></p> <p><b>Practitioner comments</b> <i>The wolf is always bad (Anastasia and Vera)</i>  <i>Once, a member of staff opens the door and calls the wolf to get into the classroom. Panayiotis starts crying (practitioner Kate)</i></p>
<p>4. 16DG, priming stressful event 16DG video data 'Why wolf? Why? Why?'</p>	<p>4. children holding on their hands soft toys and dolls are scrod the nativity saying that the wolf is there</p> <p>Child's comments: "We were running because the wolf was in the forest" (Maria) "I am scared of the wolf" (Aspasia) "You scared?" (Researcher) "Yes our children were crying!" (Maria)</p>	<p>-I don't know why they did that!! They knew that was nativity. They just wanted to destroyed they do not respect anything that is done from others (Practitioner Anastasia)</p> <p>-That is a bit worry me...it is really strange (Practitioner Vera)</p> <p>-I don't know...Maria never did something like that at home and her relationship with religious is really- really good.....I am thoughtful (Maria's mother)</p>
<p>7. 10FG stressful priming event</p> <p>8. 10FG audio children's tour 'Look the wolf!'" (On the corridor)</p> <p>9. video 'Wolf-wolf...! Are you here?'</p> <p>10. guess what I like game</p>	<p>7A new comer child is crying wanted his mum. Practitioner is telling her that the wolf took her coat and they can not go out</p> <p>8. Maria, Aspasia, Dafni -Look.....can you see the bad wolf! (Dafni it telling me) -Oooh yeah you are rigght there is a wolf here -Look what she did to the girl! -what? -she ate her leg!! Panayiotis: "I will break his legs!" Children are asking for practitioner to play the game "I am walking on the forest when the wolf is not here, wolf wolf are you here?" Panayiotis participate through the whole event. Maria is creating in the middle of the game fights.</p> <p>Maria is asking practitioner to play the game "wolf-wolf are you here?" Panayiotis participates by singing and following all the instructions as the song said Maria the same. However ,Maria after playing for 1 min starts fighting with Aspasia and she is getting upset when practitioner is not catching her</p> <p>10. -you like it you like to play "I walk in the</p>	<p>Panayiotis mother comments: "He hates that game.</p> <p>Practitioner Vera: they like that game. They are always asking me to play it.</p> <p>Panayiotis comments: he refuse to see it choosing another video</p> <p>Maria's comments: -do you know why I was upset and after I was in the single bed? (Maria) -no I don't know....(Angeliki) -because I wanted Miss to catch me and I was tired!!!! (Maria)</p>

	<p><i>forest when the wolf is not here"</i></p> <p><i>-no I don't like it!</i></p> <p><i>-you don't like it? I though you like it?</i></p> <p><i>-I don't!</i></p> <p><i>-but you asked miss Vera to play together that game!</i></p> <p><i>-no I don't like it!! Can you understand what I am telling you!!</i></p>	<p><b><i>Function in Context:</i></b> All the above events show misunderstandings and complexity between the shared meaning while practitioner comments have exactly opposite meaning from children's and parents comments. It seems that the child participates in the activity but according to their comments do not enjoy the activity although the initial impression of the video data is that children participate.</p>
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**Parents' Informed Consent (English case)**

Title: *Investigating children's perspectives on planning activities*

Dear Parent,

My name is Angeliki Bitou and I am a pre-school teacher in Greece. I am also currently a research student at the University of Wolverhampton. I am interested in finding out what children like to do during their time in the centre. I am planning to observe children three days per week from 9am to 1pm from February to June. During the research the children will be filmed and pictures will be taken. Additionally, children will be asked to take pictures, video, to tape record and to follow in a tour on their favourite inside of the nursery school. He or she will be asked some questions and a daily diary will be filled out of the activities that he or she likes. I would also like to have your participation in the research through interview and filling a daily diary with your child. Anonymity, confidentiality and privacy will be kept in each step of the research while a DVD with the data will be given to you at the end of the project. The data and some of the images gathered will be used in my PhD thesis and may be presented at educational conferences and in published papers in research journals. In case you are not willing to participate in the project your decision is not going to influence your child's life in the present nursery school.

Best wishes,

Angeliki Bitou

If you require more information about the project please do not hesitate to contact me on the following e-mail address:

[A.Bitou@wlv.ac.uk](mailto:A.Bitou@wlv.ac.uk)

**Informed Consent**

**I ..... the parent of ..... permit Angeliki Bitou to involve my child in her research. I permit her to observe video record, talk and take pictures of my child during the time that she is in the nursery school. I am also happy allow to her to involve my child in her research giving permission for ..... to take pictures, to video record and to tape record . I allow her to use the data gathered in educational conferences and in published papers in research journals.**

**Date**

**Signature**



Title: Investigating children's perspectives on planning activities

Dear Colleague,

My name is Angeliki Bitou and I am a pre-school teacher in Greece. I am also currently a PhD student at the University of Wolverhampton. I am interested in finding out what children like to do during their time in the centre. I am planning to observe the children three days per week from 9am to 1pm from February to June. During the research the children will be filmed and pictures will be taken. Additionally, children will be asked to take pictures, video, to tape record and to have a tour inside of the nursery. Children will be asked some questions and a daily diary will be made of the activities that they like. The methods will be completed with your participation in the research through interview, discussion, consultation and filling the same daily diary with the children. The data and some of the images gathered will be used in my PhD thesis and may be presented at educational conferences and in published papers in research journals. Anonymity, confidentiality and privacy will be kept in each step of the research and in discussion.

Best wishes,

Angeliki Bitou

If you require more information about the project please do not hesitate to contact me on the following e-mail address:

[A.Bitou@wlv.ac.uk](mailto:A.Bitou@wlv.ac.uk)

### **Informed Consent**

**I.....(the manager or the teacher) permit Angeliki Bitou to be in my class conducting her own research as it is described above.**

**Date**

**Signature**





**Τίτλος:** Μελετώντας τις πεποιθήσεις των παιδιών πάνω στις οργανωμένες δραστηριότητες

Αγαπητέ Γονέα,

Το όνομά μου είναι Αγγελική Μπίτου και είμαι Βρεφονηπιοκόμος στον Βρεφονηπιακό Σταθμό της Εργατικής Εστίας. Ταυτόχρονα, είμαι διδακτορική φοιτήτρια στο Πανεπιστήμιο του Wolverhampton στην Αγγλία. Αντικείμενο της έρευνάς μου είναι να βρω τι αρέσει στα παιδιά να κάνουν όταν βρίσκονται στον Βρεφονηπιακό σταθμό. Στα πλαίσια της έρευνάς προβλέπεται τα παιδιά να παρατηρηθούν τρεις μέρες την εβδομάδα κατά τις πρωινές ώρες (9 π.μ. μέχρι τις 1 μ.μ.) από τον Νοέμβριο μέχρι τον Μάρτη. Τα παιδιά θα βιντεοσκοπηθούν και θα φωτογραφηθούν. Επιπλέον, θα τους ζητηθεί να πάρουν φωτογραφίες και βίντεο ενώ θα ακολουθηθούν σε διαδρομές μέσα στο χώρο του σταθμού. Θα τους ζητηθεί, επίσης, να απαντήσουν σε κάποιες ερωτήσεις και να συμπληρώσουν ένα ημερήσιο ημερολόγιο δραστηριοτήτων. Σημαντική κρίνεται η συμβολή σας στην έρευνα με τη συνέντευξή σας (στο τέλος της έρευνας). Η ανωνυμία, ο εμπιστευτικός χαρακτήρας και το απόρρητο της έρευνας θα τηρηθούν σε κάθε βήμα της ενώ στο τέλος θα σας δοθεί DVD με τα δεδομένα. Τα δεδομένα θα χρησιμοποιηθούν στην διδακτορική μου εργασία (PhD) και πιθανόν να παρουσιαστούν σε εκπαιδευτικά συνέδρια και σε ακαδημαϊκά ερευνητικά περιοδικά. Πρέπει να επισημανθεί ότι, σε περίπτωση που δεν είσαι πρόθυμος /πρόθυμη να συμμετέχει το παιδί σου στην έρευνα, η απόφασή σου δεν θα επηρεάσει την καθημερινότητά του στον παρόντα παιδικό σταθμό.

Με εκτίμηση  
Αγγελική Μπίτου

Αν επιθυμείς περισσότερες πληροφορίες σχετικά με την έρευνα, μπορείτε να επικοινωνήσετε στην παρακάτω ηλεκτρονική διεύθυνση [A.Bitou@wlv.ac.uk](mailto:A.Bitou@wlv.ac.uk) ή στο τηλέφωνο του παιδικού σταθμού : 26510-74776.

### **Επίσημη Συγκατάθεση (Informed Consent)**

Εγώ..... ο γονέας του/της.....επιτρέπω στην Αγγελική Μπίτου να απασχολήσει το παιδί μου στη ερευνά ζητώντας του να πάρει βίντεο και φωτογραφίες . Της επιτρέπω να παρατηρήσει μέσω βιντεοσκόπησης , να μιλήσει και να φωτογραφήσει το παιδί μου κατά την διάρκεια που είναι στον παιδικό σταθμό. Της επιτρέπω επίσης να χρησιμοποιήσει τα δεδομένα της έρευνας σε εκπαιδευτικά συνέδρια και δημοσιεύσεις άρθρων σε ερευνητικά περιοδικά.

Ημερομηνία

Υπογραφή



**ΤΙΤΛΟΣ:** Μελετώντας τις πεποιθήσεις των παιδιών πάνω στις οργανωμένες δραστηριότητες

Αγαπητέ Συνάδελφε,

Το όνομα μου είναι Αγγελική Μπίτου και είμαι Βρεφονηπιοκόμος στον Βρεφονηπιακό της Εργατικής Εστίας. Είμαι επίσης διδακτορική φοιτήτρια στο Πανεπιστήμιο του Wolverhampton. Ενδιαφέρομαι να διερευνήσω τι είναι αυτό που αρέσει στα παιδιά να κάνουν κατά την διάρκεια παραμονής τους στον Βρεφονηπιακό σταθμό. Σχεδιάζω να παρατηρήσω τα παιδιά τρεις μέρες την εβδομάδα από τις 9π.μ μέχρι τις 1μ.μ. στο χρονικό διάστημα Νοεμβρίου –Μαρτίου. Κατά την διάρκεια της ερευνάς μου τα παιδιά θα βιντεοσκοπηθούν και θα φωτογραφηθούν. Επιπλέον θα ζητηθεί από τα παιδιά να πάρουν φωτογραφίες, βίντεο και θα ακολουθηθούν σε «διαδρομές» (tour) μέσα στον χώρο του παιδικού. Θα τους ζητηθεί επίσης να απαντήσουν σε κάποιες ερωτήσεις και να συμπληρώσουν ένα καθημερινό ημερολόγιο δραστηριοτήτων. Η έρευνα θα ολοκληρωθεί με την δική σας συμμετοχή μέσα από συνέντευξη, συζήτηση και συμπλήρωση του ίδιου καθημερινού ημερολογίου. Τα δεδομένα της έρευνας θα χρησιμοποιηθούν στην διδακτορική μου διατριβή και πιθανόν να παρουσιαστούν σε εκπαιδευτικά συνέδρια και να δημοσιευθούν σε επιστημονικού χαρακτήρα ερευνητικά περιοδικά. Η ανωνυμία, ο εμπιστευτικός χαρακτήρας και το απόρρητο της έρευνας θα τηρηθεί σε κάθε βήμα.

Με εκτίμηση,

Αγγελική Μπίτου,

Εάν επιθυμείται περισσότερες πληροφορίες σχετικά με την έρευνα παρακαλώ επικοινωνήστε στην ακόλουθη ηλεκτρονική διεύθυνση [A.Bitou@wlv.ac.uk](mailto:A.Bitou@wlv.ac.uk)

### **Επίσημη Συγκατάθεση (Informed Consent)**

Εγώ .....(η διευθύντρια ή βρεφονηπιοκόμος) επιτρέπω στην Αγγελική Μπίτου να είναι στην τάξη μου και να πραγματοποιήσει την ερευνά της έτσι όπως περιγράφεται ποιο πάνω.

**Ημερομηνία**

**Υπογραφή**

## Children's Informed Consent (English case)

**HELLO \_\_\_\_\_! MY NAME IS ANGELIKI.**



**I CAME TO YOUR CENTRE TO LEARN WHAT MAKES YOU FEEL  
HAPPY!**



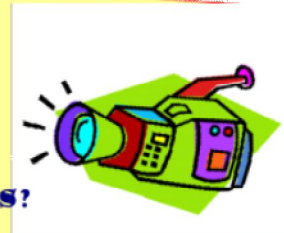
**CAN I FILM YOU?**

**CAN I TAKE PICTURES OF YOU?**

**CAN I ASK YOU TO TAKE PICTURES?**

**CAN I WATCH WHAT YOU ARE DOING?**

**SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_**



**IF THERE IS SOMETHING YOU DON'T LIKE, JUST TELL ME "STOP"**

**I WILL NOT TELL TO ANYBODY YOUR REAL NAME**



**SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_**



**THANK YOU!!!**

## Children's Informed Consent (Greek case)

ΓΕΙΑ ΣΟΥ \_\_\_\_\_ ! ΤΟ ΟΝΟΜΑ ΜΟΥ ΕΙΝΑΙ ΑΓΓΕΛΙΚΗ .

ΗΡΘΑ ΣΤΟ ΣΤΑΘΜΟ ΣΟΥ ΓΙΑ ΝΑ ΜΑΘΩ ΤΙ ΣΕ ΚΑΝΕΙ ΧΑΡΟΥΜΕΝΟ !



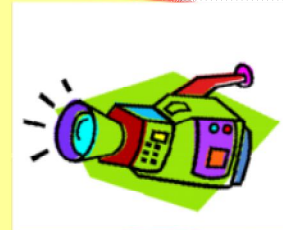
ΜΠΟΡΩ ΝΑ ΣΕ ΒΙΝΤΕΟΣΚΟΠΗΣΩ;

ΜΠΟΡΩ ΝΑ ΣΕ ΦΩΤΟΓΡΑΦΗΣΩ;

ΝΑ ΣΟΥ ΖΗΤΗΣΩ ΝΑ ΠΑΡΕΙΣ ΦΩΤΟΓΡΑΦΙΕΣ ΚΙ ΕΣΥ;

ΜΠΟΡΩ ΝΑ ΒΛΕΠΩ ΤΙ ΚΑΝΕΙΣ;

ΥΠΟΓΡΑΦΗ \_\_\_\_\_



ΑΝ ΕΙΝΑΙ ΚΑΤΙ ΠΟΥ ΔΕΝ ΣΟΥ ΑΡΕΣΣΕΙ ΠΕΣ ΜΟΥ «ΣΤΑΜΑΤΑ!!!»



ΔΕΝ ΘΑ ΠΩ ΣΕ ΚΑΝΕΝΑΝ ΤΟ ΑΛΗΘΙΝΟ ΣΟΥ ΟΝΟΜΑ .



ΥΠΟΓΡΑΦΗ \_\_\_\_\_



ΣΕ ΕΥΧΑΡΙΣΤΩ ΠΟΛΥ !!!

## **Appendix B**

### **Documentation related to Chapter 4**

## Tables

**Table of Data 4.1a**

Note: the first three characters are referring to the date, month and country. The rest of the code starting with MOVO is the number of the video data

<p><b>Videos</b></p> <p>Total 7 hours in England</p> <p>Jennifer: 31 videos</p> <p>Ian: 25 video</p> <p>Arthur : 30 videos</p> <p>Total 8.5 hours in Greece 8,5</p> <p>Maria: 26 videos</p> <p>Christos: 26</p> <p>Panayiotis: 25</p>	<p><b>England:</b></p> <p>21FEMOVO2039 – 28FEMOVO2157 – 28FEMOVO2158 – 28FEMOVO2159 – 28FEMOVO2161 – 28FEMOVO2162 – 28FEMOVO2163 – 6MrEMOVO2220 – 6MrEMOVO2221 – 6MrEMOVO2222 – 6MhEMOVO2227 – 6MhEMOVO2317 – 6MhEMOVO2318 – 10MhEMOVO2225 – 10MhEMOVO2251 – 13MhEMOVO2577 – 13MhEMOVO2578 – 13MhEMOVO2579 – 13MhEMOVO2580 – 13MhEMOVO2581 – 13MhEMOVO2582 – 18MrEMOVO2524 – 20MrEMOVO2577 – 20MrEMOVO2578 – 20MrEMOVI2579 – 20MrEMOVI2580 – 20MrEMOVI2581 – 20MrEMOVI2582 – 10AEMOVO2820 – 10AEMOVO2824 (Jennifer’s video) – 14AEMOVO2884 – 15AEMOVO2906 – 15AEMOVO2909 – 15AEMOVO2910 – 15AEMOVO2911 – 15AEMOVO2912 – 15AEMOVO2915 – 24AEMOVO3011 – 14AEMOVO2881 – 14AEMOVO2882 – 14AEMOVO2907 – 15AEMOVO2916 – 17AEMOVO2940 – 24AEMOVO3011 – 24AEMOVO3012 – 24AEMOVO3013 – 24AEMOVO3014 – 24AEMOVO3015 – 8MyEMOVO3351 – 8MyEMOVO3368 – 8MyEMOVO3382 – 8MyEMOVO3383 – 8MyEMOVO3384 – 13MyEMOVO3610 – 13MyEMOVO3611 – 13MyEMOVO3612 – 13MyEMOVO3609 (child’s video) – 2JnE MOVO3885 – 3JnEMOVO3902 – 3JnEMOVO3911 – 8MyEMOVO3361 – 8MyEMOVO3362 – 22MyEMOVO3691 – 3JnEMOVO3908 – 9JnEMOVO4228 – 10JnEMOVO4235 – 16JnE MOVO4570 – 17JnE MOVO4589 – 24JnEMOVO4687 – 24JnEMOVO4697 – 24JnEMOVO4698 – 24JnEMOVO4699 – 24JnEMOVO4700 – 30JnEMOVO4754 – 30JnEMOVO4755 – 30JnEMOVO4756 – 30JnEMOVO4757 – 30JnEMOVO4758 – 30JnEMOVO4759 – 7JyEMOVO4818 – 7JyEMOVO4821 – 8JyEMOVO4840 – 14JyEMOVO4932 – 15JyEMOVO4961 – 15JyEMOVO4962 – 17JyEMOVI4905</p> <p><b>Greece:</b></p> <p>24NGMOVO5759 – 1DGMOVO5861 – 1DGMOVO5863 – 3DGMOVO5946 – 3DGMOVO5947 – 8DGMOVO5950 – 8DGMOVO5974 – 8DGMOVO5975 – 8DGMOVO5976 – 8DGMOVO5983 – 8DGMOVO5984 – 8DGMOVO5985 – 8DGMOVO5986 – 11DGMOVO6008 – 11DGMOVO6009 – 11DGMOVO6010 – 15DGMOVO6032 – 15DGMOVO6027 – 16DGMOVO6047 – 16DGMOVO6060 – 16DGMOVO6061 – 12JGMOVO6262 – 12JGMOVO6263 – 12JGMOVO6264 – 12JGMOVO6265 – 12JGMOVO6266 – 19JGMOVO6374 – 19JGMOVO6380 – 19JGMOVO6381 – 19JGMOVO6382 – 19JGMOVO6383 – 19JGMOVO6384 – 19JGMOVO6385 – 19JGMOVO6386 – 20JGMOVO6423 – 20JGMOVO6424 – 20JGMOVO6425 – 22JGMOVO6429 – 22JGMOVO6430 – 22JGMOVO6437 – 23JGMOVO6454 – 23JGMOVO6455 – 23JGMOVO6456 – 23JGMOVO6457 – 23JGMOVO6458 – 23JGMOVO6459 – 23JGMOVO6460 – 23JGMOVO6461 – 23JGMOVO6465 – 3FGMOVO6556 – 4FG MOVO6560 – 4FGMOVO6563 – 4FG(MOVO6710 – 6FGMOVO6571 – 10FGMOVO6624 – 11FGMOVO6640 – 11FGMOVO6641 – 11FGMOVO6642 – 11FGMOVO6649 – 11FGMOVO6643 – 12FGMOVO6661 – 12FGMOVO6671 – 12FGMOVO6677 – 12FGMOVO6682 – 12FGMOVO6959 – 16FGMOVO6691 – 16FGMOVO6692 – 16FGMOVO6693 – 16FGMOVO6694 – 3MGMOVO6702 – 3MGMOVO6752 – 4MGMOVO6706 – 4MGMOVO6707 – 4MGMOVO6710 – 4MGMOVO6711 – 4MGMOVO6712 – 10MGMOVO6746</p>
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<b>Telephone Discussions</b> 7 in total	<b>England:</b> 13May (Ian) – 20May (Ian)
	<b>Greece:</b> 3DG (Maria) – 23JG (Maria) – 16FG (Maria) – 16AG (Panayiotis) – 3AG (Christos)
<b>Tours</b> 18 in total	<b>England:</b> 13MrE (Jennifer) – 10AE (Jennifer)  8MyE(Ian) – 8MyEMOVO3351 (Ian) – 9JnEMOVO4222-28 (Ian) – 3JnE (Ian) – 16JnEMOVO4558-62 (Ian)  16JnE (Jennifer)  10JnE (Arthur) – 16JnE (Arthur) – 23JnEMOVO4663 – 24JnE MOVO4697 – 30JnEMOVO4770-73
	<b>Greece:</b> 10FG (children's directed)audio DM200059 – 12FG(Children's directed) – 4MG children's directed – 4MG (adult's directed) – 5MG adult's directed
<b>Routine Cards (England)</b> 7 times	28FE (Ian) – 10AE(Jennifer) – 24AE(Jennifer) – 3MayE (Ian) – 8MayE (Ian) – 10JuneE(Arthur) – 17JuneE(Arthur)
<b>Guess what I like game (Greece)</b> 9 times	22JG – 23JG – 26JG – 3FG – 10FG – 16FG – 3MG – 4MG – 9MG
<b>Building Blocks</b> 6 times in total	<b>England:</b> 26FE(Ian) – 27FE (Ian) – 20MayE (Ian)
	<b>Greece:</b> 2DG (Maria) – 3DG (Maria) – 11DG (Maria)
<b>Digital Camera</b>   <b>Total in England</b> 138	<b>England</b>  <b>Bikes, scooters, wheelbarrows</b> (24 total) 10AE – 14AE – 15AE – 8MyE – 20MyE – 22MyE – 3JnE – 9JnE – 30JnE  <b>Traffic signs</b> 11: 14JyE

<b>Total in Greece 323</b>	<p><b>Door:</b> 3 (8<sup>th</sup> of May)</p> <p><b>Digger 2</b> pictures, 1 video ,10AE</p> <p><b>Tower 7</b> and requested 13 20MhE – 6MyE – 12MyE – 13MyE – 26FE</p> <p><b>Circle time 3</b> 7 JyE</p> <p><b>Nature 31</b> 10AE – 14AE – 15AE – 8MyE – 12MyE – 13MyE – 16JnE – 9JnE – 30JnE</p> <p><b>Fence 21</b> 10AE – 14AE – 15AE – 8MyE – 22MyE – 3JnE – 9JnE – 30JnE</p> <p><b>Dogs 4</b> 16JnE</p> <p><b>Tunnels 5</b> 22AE</p>
	<p><b>Greece</b></p> <p><b>Height: 24</b> 2DG – 16DG – 6FG – 12FG – 16FG – 4MG – 9MG</p> <p><b>Circle time 36</b> 12JG – 23JG – 22JG – 27JG – 29JG</p> <p><b>Shoes: 35</b> 1DG – 8DG – 17DG – 19JG – 29JG – 6FG</p> <p><b>Sea: 3 (broken cars constructed as sea)</b> 8DG</p> <p><b>Drawer 15</b> 1DG – 11DG – 17DG – 19JD – 6FG – 10FG</p>



**Table: 21**

1DG – 8DG – 16DG – 19JG – 22JG – 27JG – 6FG – 10FG

**Wolf game 8**

24NG – 26NG – 4MG

**Lights7**

16FG – 10MG – 27JG – 11FG

**Turtle 9**

8DG – 16DG

**Building blocks:6**

17DG

**Real tools 11**

22JG

**Roof- outside area 43**

26JG – 27JG

**Carpet lines 14**

8DG – 12JG – 6FG

**Story books: 7 and (6 of wolf )**

24NG – 26NG – 11DG

**Doors: 6**

19JG – 6MG – 3AG

**Crafts 30**

2DG – 11FG – 15DG

**Snow1/ Stepping on the chair: 1**

12FG

**Grocery shop: 40**

1DG – 8DG – 11DG – 16DG – 12JG – 19JG – 23JG – 26JG – 27JG – 29JG – 6FG – 10FG – 11FG

<b>Treasure Basket 7 in total</b>	<b>England:</b> 8May – 20May – 16June
	<b>Greece :</b> 3March – 4March – 9March – 10March
<b>Drawings</b>	16FG two drawings
<b>Interviews</b>	In both countries from all practitioners and parents. Children's comments are combined with the visual data (not in all of them)
<b>Field Notes</b>	Combining with the videos and the rest of the data.
<b>Planning of the children's Interest (England)</b>	From February to July in England (from 9:30 until 12:00 o' clock) three days per week
	From November to April in Greece (from 9:00 until 13:00 o' clock) three days per week
	For everyday the observation was taken place. (Only practitioners in England were keeping record of the Planning).

**Table 4.2: The mosaic of the events on the symbolic and material culture on the wolf event**

The Priming events is stressful and is not reported for ethical issues	24NG field notes: "Are you scared of the wolf?" (Panayiotis)	Pictures of Panayiotis the same day (24NG)	26NG field notes "Are you scared of the wolf?" (Panayiotis)	Anastasia, Vera and Eva- Practitioners' comments (interviews and field notes )	28NG field notes breakfast time "Look! The wolf is moving"	Panayiotis is asking me "is it coming for real?" researcher (28N field notes)	Panayiotis and Maria's mothers comments' (intervi ews and informal meetings)
The Priming events is stressful and is not reported for ethical issues	16DG MOVO6060 "Why wolf? Why? Why?" (all the group except Christos)	Practitioner's comments: "They wanted to destroy the nativity" (Anastasia's interview)	Parent's comments: "She has got good relationship with the religious" (Maria's mother's interview)	Child's comments on the video "We were running to protect our children from the wolf" (Maria) "I am scared of the wolf" (Aspasia)	23JG MOVO6465 video "-The wolf is crying! -No tears are coming up! (Maria and Christos,)	Guess what I like game (Maria) 23 <sup>rd</sup> of January "I don't like this game" (Maria)	
The priming events is stressful and is not fully reported	10FG field notes Panayiotis story "I will break his leg!"	10FG audio DM200059 children's tour "Look the wolf!" (On the corridor)	10FG wolf MOVO6624 video "Wolf-wolf...! Are you here?"	10FG "guess what I like game" "I don't want to see that video" (Panayiotis) "I don't like this game!"	12FG Marias and Aspasia's comments and fieldnotes "we were not fighting...I was tired" (Maria)		
The priming events is stressful and is not reported for ethical issues	16FG MOVO6692-3 video "Grrrrrr...woof woof! I am the wolf!" (Panayiotis Maria and Aspasia)	16FG Audio DM200057 "I was tired!" (Maria)	Children's comments: "do you think is right to play the same game all the time?" (Maria)	16FG photographs (Maria) Maria took pictures of the spatial borders and asking for researcher to have them at her house			
The Priming events is stressful and is not reported for ethical issues.	4MG MOVO6706-07 video Searching for the Red Book -playing the wolf	4MG MOVO6710-12 video "baaaaaaaaaaam....I killed him" (all the group) (Panayiotis)	4MG Christos photographs While were playing the game	4MG MOVO67-10-11 video "My gun's name is Stuklan! And I killed the wolf!" (Christos)	4MG MOVO6711 Video "Where is your scissor? Here it is!" (Maria and Aspasia)	Panayiotis "Guess what I like game" "I don't like the Red Book"	

Table 4.4. The Mosaic of the events on Handicrafts and the curriculum

1DG MOVO5861 video “You!! You are going to do the same!” Maria is telling to Anastasios	Practitioners’ Vera comments :“They enjoy observing me doing crafts but they are fighting because they are selfish”	4FGMOVO6560 video: Maria and Aspasia argue about the hat“Tha hat with the flower is mine!”(Maria)	4FG field notes :Maria is coming asking me “show me my hat”	6FG “That is my car” MOVO6571 video Children argue about which car is Dafni’s	6FGaudioDM200038 “Which car is yours?” Children show their crafts.	Practitioner’s comments:“They are too young to remember” (Vera)
Parent’s comments: All parents argue that children can recognise their belongings	1DG MOVO5861 video “fights before starting doing crafts”	3DG MOVO5946 “nagging before starting doing crafts”	3DG MOVO5947 “I want tooooooo!” nagging before starting doing crafts	15DG MOVO6032 Panayiotis insists that he needs more time to finish his work but practitioner said “we do not have time...I am sorry”		
16D MOVO6047 “nagging before starting” doing plasticise children waiting for practitioner to give them items.Children have fights as long as they are waiting for their turn to come. They stop once they have all the equipment.	4thMG Audio DM200117 “I want to see something!” (Maria is asking me to see the glitter on the cupboard)	11FG MOVO6643 “Run Panayiotaki we do not have time” (Maria and Panayiotis doing blotches on the paper)	12FG Arriving in the classroom, field notes and watching the new craft on the wall (see further table 4.2,2)	Panayiotis pictures: Panayiotis is taking pictures of the used pencils at the 11 <sup>th</sup> of February saying that is for “we do not have time”		
Mothers comments: <i>No.... it is our mistake to place them in our pace of life. I don’t have time neither to talk with his teacher, in the morning I am just bringing him and I am leaving him straight away as I need to “deliver” the rest (of my children) and I do believe that the whole responsibility is mine (Panayiotis mother)</i>		Practitioner’s comments: <i>The way they draw is really strong.....too much pressed and very quick ,....I have told them many times not to do that, I have make a notice to them for that....and I know that Maria and Panayiotis normally they do not draw in this way. It is my fault here, I push many times the children with the time, and some other times when they are doing any craft I direct them on what is nice and what not ...</i>			16 FG “bebebebebe” MOVO6694: Panayiotis encourages her friends to repeat the activity of 11 <sup>th</sup> of February on the flow of the game they starts mocking practitioners holding their drawings	
Child pictures: Panayiotis take pictures of the table, the trolley that they use through the whole event (16 <sup>th</sup> of February)	Drawings and field notes : Panayiotis and Anastasios gave to me the drawings to have it (16 <sup>th</sup> of February)					Child’s comments ( 16FG audio DM200098 We were mocking (practitioners) because we have got and they don’t.

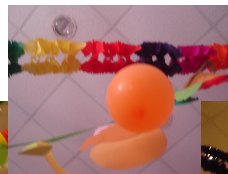
**Table 4.5 The crafts and the height: ‘Angeliki!! Lift me up to touch this!’ (Christos)**

Event and methods	Description-Function in the context	Practitioner comments
1. 12FG MOVO6677 video and field notes “I wish we had a ladder to reach it!”	1. When we arrived at the room Christos notices the new handicraft practitioner put on the wall. The same Maria has been noticed this morning. “Θέλω να την φτάσω=I want to reach it”Christos said and he stretched his body to reach the bee.”We need a ladder” (Anastasios said )” lets go to find one (12FGfield notes). Children on the video are using the bike as an ladder to reach the bee that it is displayed on the wall - Practitioner prevents them from stepping on the bike	1 “I don’t like them to come in a cold-naked room like in the hospitals. We want the area to be nice decorated to make the children to feel happy!...But I don’t like them to step and reach them” (Practitioner Vera)
2. 4MGfield notes “Angeliki help me to reach something!”	2. Christos and Aspasia are asking researcher to reach the craft that is hanging from the sealing in front of the lift. Researcher is taking them on her hands helping them to touch the craft. Unfortunately the craft is falling down and the cleaner starts shouting trying to find who is guilty. Researcher and the children are managing to get away moving with the lift on the upper floor. Christos’s comments afterwards are: “I will destroy this school”	2. “The topic of those crafts are related with some national anniversaries such as the 21 <sup>st</sup> of February, or the 28 <sup>th</sup> of October, or there are some religious connected, for instance the Christmas, the carnivals or the spring, the autumn. We wanted through them to understand also the subjects we have discuss previously for instance about the dog or the cat!” (Practitioner Anastasia).
3. (12FG MOVO6659 and field notes “I will take one ladder”	When children arrive in the room Maria is looking on the wall at the bee practitioner place there. She stares at it for a couple of second without saying anything. “hmhhmm” Maria is saying and she turns her head with eager. She is leaving. Practitioner is telling them they are going to put some garlands so she will put some music for them to dance so as to leave her alone to finish with the decoration. Practitioner opens the garlands on the table. Maria is about to go closer to practitioner but practitioner said “No here children! I have work to do”. The three children instead to play they are sitting on the mattress looking from distance what practitioner is doing. Practitioner said “I am going to bring a ladder soon I will be back!” Panayiotis repeats what practitioner said by transferring the activity to himself “I will take one ladder!”	3. It is dangerous for them to be involved in such activities. Some times I am doing those tasks when they are not in the classroom(practitioner Vera)
4.12FGMOVO6661 Watching the garlands)	4. Children observe practitioner to decorate the classroom for the carnivals. She steps on the ladder. They are silent but at the 1:26min after looking at her for a long time Maria and Aspasia with mocking face are asking each others: “what shall we do?” -Leave the ladder and to put it over there!=Ασε την σκάλα να το βάλλουμε εκεί πάνω! (Aspasia is answering to her). After two min on the same video the two girls are pretending fighting : “Why miss is on the toopppppp of the ladder!!!!...η κυρίαααααααααααα γιατίιιιιιιιιιιι ανέβηκε στην σκάαααααααααααα!”! Aspasia is telling shouting and looking at what practitioner was doing I will shout at her!=Θα την μαλώωωωωωωωω!! This is Miss. ..there! =Η κυρία είναι εκεί! Maria is telling her and indicates her. At the 6 min. the three children discussing they agree that they are not falling from the ladder	Practitioner is telling in front of the children that she does not want them to be present during the decoration because she is worrying them not stepping on the ladder and fall down. the event of 12FGMOVO6661 follows practitioners comments.
5.12 <sup>th</sup> February field notes	5.Panayiotis is taking picture of the new decoration trying to reach the garlands when practitioner is away “I want to touch it!” he is telling	
6. (16FG MOVO6691 “I was about to fall down....hahhahhahaa”)	6.children are trying to reach the girlandes pretending that they are falling down Panayiotis stretches his body so much that he was about to fall down “Παρά λίγο να πέσω κάτω”= I was about to fall down, hahhahhahhahaa Panayiotis is telling laughing “Αααααα” Aspasia is trying to touch the new crafts “Αααααα” Panayiotis repeats pretending the are falling down . Panayiotis and Aspasia are jumping	Ohhhh yeahh the girlandes are for repair! I have notice that....they were trying to reach it...for this reason falls down....and the other one? Hmmmmmm they pull down the balloon and the other side of the garlands falls down.....i could not find the ladder so I remove it (practitioner Vera)
7. 16FG field notes	7. Children are asking researcher to raise them up to reach the	




## balloons and the garlands

- |  |   |  |   |  |
|--|---|--|---|--|
| <p>8. 16 FG “Help I am falling down!”<br/>MOVO6694)</p> <p>9. 16FG field notes and child’s pictures</p> <p>10. 4 MG MOVO6706<br/>“Angeliki come to see what I am doing” )</p> <p>11. 4MG “trying to touch the garlands” Audio<br/>DM200116-17”</p> | <p>8. Panayiotis is trying to reach the balloon and the garlands and he pretends that is falling down asking for researcher to help –focus on the film</p> <p>9. Panayiotis is asking checking how tall enough is the researcher to reach the garlands from the ground by asking researcher to stretch her hands up. He is taking pictures. However he mentions that his dad could help him better than the researcher.</p> <p>10. Panayiotis is trying to reach the garlands by throw the ball up to the garlands. He is asking by researcher to depict that on her camera. Practitioner finally stops him from doing that mention that the garlands are about to broke down.</p> <p>11. Children are asking from researcher to reach the garlands and the balloons that practitioner put for decoration on their classroom. Panayiotis depict the event on pictures</p> | <p>12. 10<sup>th</sup> March “playing with balloons”MOVO 67 46)</p> <p>13. 10MG treasure basket field notes )</p> <p>14. Children’s tour 5<sup>th</sup> March</p> <p>15. 10<sup>th</sup> March</p> | <p>12. Panayiotis is asking researcher to video filming him while he plays with the balloon that has falling down from the garlands. Panayiotis having found the balloon from the garlands is playing alone challenging his skills</p> <p>13. Panayiotis is trying to put into the “treasure box” the balloon. It can not fit “<i>I will put it in with my fantasy!</i>” “<i>θα το βάλλω με την φαντασία μου!</i>” “<i>He closes the case and he is rocking it.</i></p> <p>14. Children are asking from researcher to lift them up to switch off and on the lights. Similar at the 11<sup>th</sup> of February children asked researcher to turn off the lights to play the “sleeping game”. During the tour however they asked researcher to lift them up to do it by themselves.</p> <p>15. Panayiotis shows his counting abilities while at the same time he mentions that today all the lights were on. And indeed, in the picture he did the lights were on. Looking the pictures he has taken the previous days it has been realised that the lights are not all on. It seems that Panayiotis has created his own way to count things by observing the lights and counting how many are on and off.</p> | <p>Parents comments: He adores balloons</p> <p>Parents comments: “he does not like things being too height for him. He asked from his dad to raise him up to reach the ceiling and the things that are there”. His mother also mentions that he is getting really sad when items like CD player or pictures are in height.</p> |
|--|---|--|---|--|



**Table 4.6 Transformation from area to area**

Events	Description-function in context	Practitioners comments
<p><i>Colour</i></p> <p>1. (15<sup>th</sup> of April, field notes "picture!")</p>	<p><i>Jennifer and Emma are putting their hands into the white colour. Jennifer raises the hands at the researcher and asks for a picture "picture!" she said.</i></p>	<p>"Main table: range of coloured paints, paper; place the paint on the plates. Play dough cutter with wheels. Mark paintings etc" (Planning for the best interest of the children) they wanted the child to use the different tools to try different traces on the paper</p>
<p>2. 15A E "how the black doll become white, blue and then yellow", video MOVO2906, 9, 10, 11, 12,)</p>	<p>2. Jennifer is leaving from the big table and she goes in the carpet area where the dolls are. She is taking one doll and she is spreading on doll's head the white colour.</p> <p>Child comments: I am washing the doll. I've got shampoo <b>Parents comments:</b> She is painting anyway, she likes playing in the water anything messy (Jennifer's mother interview)</p>	<p>Put dolls on the floor, with nappies, clothes so children can dress. Also take care of the dolls, encourage personal hygiene ((Planning for the best interest of the children)</p>
<p>3. 15AE "Washing the doll", MOVO2915)</p>	<p>3. 2:20 she finishes with the doll cleaning and she takes a yellow jar. She is filling in with water and she goes on the kitchen corner to play with it (2min)</p> 	<p>Oh yeah, it was as funny anyway. It makes me laugh. He was really funny there! It's like getting something therapeutic out of it! Because, looking around... Oh, bless! That was not part of the planning because the painting was on the table. That's right. She is not bothering what colour it is. You know, it makes me wonder whether she thinks because most of the babies she picked up got no hair so she's putting the colours on to make it look like they have got hair (laughs). (Practitioner Caroline, interview)</p>
<p>4. 15<sup>th</sup> of April field notes : the child from water play is removing water to the kitchen area</p>	<p>Jennifer is leaving the washing the doll activity and she goes transferring water on the kitchen corner as she had done yesterday.</p>	
<p>5. 22<sup>nd</sup> of April, field notes</p>	<p>5. Practitioner integrate Jennifer's event into the next planning (see above picture) Once Jennifer is coming she goes straight away on the water tray. She is putting her hands on the water and she is leaving. She goes on the big table without being more occupied here (present moment)</p>	

### Water tray and kitchen:

Events	Description
<p>1.14AE "watching the others playing with the water" MOVO2877 )</p>	<p>1. (00:14) Ian keeping the aeroplane on his hands is stepping with his knees now on the chair looking at what the children are doing in the water tray. 00:25 he is stretching his body on the stand of the grocery furniture trying to see what Emma is doing exactly with the pot. (1:58) he starts looking again on what Emma and Dianna are doing. 2:00 he stands up and he is going on the water tray. Mothers comments: "He is not usually interested in things like that. Because he gets his hands dirty. He is not usually keen on that" (Ian mother interview)</p>
<p>2.14AE field notes, prior events</p>	<p>2. Ian stands up without doing anything. He is watching the other children and he is going to the kitchen quickly. He is taking the coffee machine. He is placed on the table. After a while he is taking the kettle he is going to the water tray and he is taking water. He is putting water in and then he is pouring into the coffee machine. In the video is the third time that he is going it.</p>
<p>3. 14AE "no more water!" MOVO2881</p>	<p>3. Ian is taking the kettle and goes on the water tray. He is filling it up with water. He is leaving and he goes back on the kitchen corner. He is pouring the water into the bottle. He goes back on the tray repeating the same process....(2:01) "no more water!" practitioner Caroline is telling him loudly bringing with her the plastic bucket with the mop. Ian is looking at her and he starts moving with his hand the water from the table to the floor "nooooooooooooo" practitioner Caroline is telling him and she removes the kettles and bottles from the table. Ian is standing up keeping his wet sleeve. He is silent. Practitioner is grasping him from the hand and she is telling "right!!!! No more water now!"</p>

4. field notes and video 14AE "no more water"  
MOVO2882

2<sup>nd</sup> day water and kitchen area.

5.15 AE "Driving cartoon car"  
MOVO2916)

4. The child is still close to the area observing practitioner who is trying to remove the water from the floor.

5. Ian driving his cartoon car goes round and round. His last stop is in the kitchen where he is watching the other children to transfer water from the water tray to the kitchen area. After spending more than 7 min observing the other children he leaves the cartoon and he takes a kettle and he starts transferring water from the water tray to the kitchen. Practitioner announces, "tidy up time". Practitioner is surprising seeing all the children are in the water area "All the kids are in the water????!?!?! She is telling to the other members of staff. Ian is leaving and he goes straight away on the easel with the magnets.

Water trays: put water tray together fill one with water, put jugs in the tray, and in the second  
**Practitioner comments :** tray funnels and the water wheel in so the water to be transported from one tray



to other. (Planning for the children's best interest)

Ian has extended the planning ... Definitely, yeah. With the, especially transport and things like that definitely.

Note: on the above event practitioner is focusing on the cartoon associated with Ian's interest about the car and the wheels and not on the fact that he is giving up the cartoon going and playing on the water tray. She is not focusing on the fact that the child (who does not like the messy activities) is taking the initiative to get involved in a messy activity

### Transferring toys from the infants room or playing on the babies room(Ian)

Events	Description	Practitioners comments
1.8May England, Walking with video part A, video MOVO3351	1. 2:25 Ian stops again in front of the babies. He is watching what they are doing. (2:42) he goes closer. He is watching them.	In all this cases child's action was not part of the adults planning
2. 8 <sup>th</sup> of May – transferring MOVO3382-83-84)	2. Ian is collected with his trolley toys from babies room. He goes on the water tray and on the flow of the play with Allan the toys from the babies room are placing on the water tray. Children are playing here more than 6min	Practitioner explains Sidy's and Ian's action due to the fact they use to be in the babies group since early age.
3. 14April the aeroplane	3. Ian is coming holding on his hands one aeroplane toy from babies room. He is asking from researcher to take a picture of him raising up the toy.	
4. 8 <sup>th</sup> of May the cube	4. Ian is showing to researcher how the cube toy from the babies room is working. He places the cube on the top of researcher's notebook and he said "picture"	
5. 30 <sup>th</sup> of June field notes	5. More toys from the babies room has been found on the playgroup (magic board, doll house, fish tray)	
6.30 <sup>th</sup> of June Sidy field notes	6. Sidy asked from researcher to follow her on the babies room. She explores the new sensory corner.	Parents commenst: he is particular emotional with the babies. He is also worrying a lot about his young sister.
7. 30 <sup>th</sup> of June MOVO4754-59 playing with flour	7. Sidy, Jennifer, Ian and three more children from the playgroup are playing with the flour tray, transferring more items on the flour. Sidy previously has been prevented by practitioner to transfer flour on the sensory corner.	
8. 2 <sup>nd</sup> of June field notes	8. Ian has is asking researcher to take picture of him playing with the train-wheel item transferred from babies room	
9. 3 <sup>rd</sup> of June MOVO3911	9. Ian is asking researcher to video film him playing with the train-wheel toy from the babies room	
10. 10 <sup>th</sup> of July field notes	10. Ian is asking again from researcher to take a picture of him playing with a sensory toy transferred from the babies room	

### Sum up

The above events similar with the case of Ian (with keys and traffic sings) shows that what the child intends to do in one case, it is not granted that can be on the centre of their attention on the next planning day. The "here and now" situation plays significant role on the way children are involved in one activity. Transferring items from one area to another is factor that determines significantly children contribution on the planned of the day. Even if practitioners are trying to eliminate the process of transferring children are keeping beyond adult's expectations make connections.



## Section 4.1 (Greek case)

### §1 Christos's mother mentions

*'The wolf is not under his interest, there is nothing relevant with wolf to worry him but I know that other children on the centre..... they are scared of that....and last year Christos was about to start worrying about that but I handle it on time....'.*

(Christos mother interview)

### §2 Panayiotis' mother mentions:

*'Ohhhh... I want to tell you something ...you know I am so upset with this foolish story of the wolf that is coming and eating the bad kids! I can not understand what they said there (in the day care centre) to the kids about the wolf! The child was listening "wolf" and he was starting crying!!! This year the things are better. But I am working on that a lot with him . At home we play the wolf often, we feed him pasta, we dance with him, and the wolf is a friend of us that we visit him offering presents and such a kind of stuff. But I have never- never- never told him that the wolf is bad and he is going to open the door and eat us. Never- never!! Neither his brothers nor sisters... I am so fed up with that!!'*

(Panayiotis mother's comments, field notes)

**§3.** *'The children are scared of the wolf because of the way we spoke and present it. Last year we use to read story books where the wolf was coming and eating the bad kids. Afterwards every time any child was naughty- for different reasons, the wolf was about to come and do to them what the book was saying. Once, a member of staff opens the door and calls the wolf to get into the classroom. Panayiotis started crying. Another time they were playing the famous game 'I walk in the forest when the wolf is not here' Panayiotis was crying again. However the game was still on...'* (Practitioner Eva interview)

### §4. Event 'dadadadadada the wolf!!!' video data

*Christos starts slapping the picture of the wolf in a very childish way.*

*- da daa da da da da da a*

*Maria is doing the same "da da da da da dad a"*

*-aaaaaaaaaaaaammmm aaaaaamm*

*Christos is trying to eat it*

*- And here!( Eleni indicates him which other part of the wolf should eat*

*-aaaaaaaaaaaaammmm!!! ( While Christos opens his mouth eating the wolf spittle is coming out )*

-he is crying (this is not the exact translation the child is telling “*Βγάζει δάκρυα*”) Maria is telling him a bit disgusted (face gesture)

- No!! Tears are not coming out! (*Δεν βγάζει δάκρυα!*) Christos is telling her

(23<sup>rd</sup> January “*dadadadadada the wolf!!!*” MOVO6465 video data)

§5’and here is again the wolf.....Panayiotis used to be the child that was scared the most of the wolf, this year he pretends a lot as if being a wolf. Last year he was with me and it happens to put on the CD player one song “I am walking in the forest when the wolf is not here” and Panayiotis every time he was listening to the song he started crying but around the end of last academic year and this year, he pretends as being a wolf and he said “I am not scared of the wolf”.’ (Practitioner Vera interview)

§6. ‘Last year I tried to make them to get the use of the wolf through the game “I am walking in the forest” and through different story books, but most probably what can make them being scared e.g the fairy tell about the “the Little Red Riding Hood girl” ....can be my facial gestures and movements that I am doing when I am reading the story book.. However, I have told them that it is not something that they should worry as wolf is not going to come and knock our door.’ (Practitioner’s Vera interview)

This quotation is completely different from the field notes of 10<sup>th</sup> of February and 28<sup>th</sup> of November and §6. However on the flow of the interview practitioner said: ‘I don’t know what principles to pass to the children...I pass them what I think can be good for them....the way I am working is completely empirical and I learnt that during the practical training and from other colleagues from the TEI’ (practitioner Vera interview)

§7. ‘In the beginning when I brought her from home(here) we were going and counting by 10 in the area where the wolf is....you know where exactly I mean....we were staying there waiting practitioner to come and pick her up. Maria used to tell me “here to sit down here on the wolf to discuss” (she was telling me) we were doing that for a long time. We were counting by 10 to make the wolf to leave and we were watching the leg of the Little Red Riding Hood girl that was broken. “Once you will count by ten to the wolf you will leave” she used to telling me. I never understand why but it was something she wanted.....At home she was pretending to me that she is about to be horrified and scared of the wolf and then she was starting laughing and saying ‘ohhh my sweetie mum the wolf.....’ in the style of assumption....more like being a joke’ (Maria’s mother interview)

**§8 Event ‘The wolf the wolf the wolf!’, audio data**

*Dafni: Come here ....come here for a bit to show you something*

*She grasps my hand and she tells me*

*Dafni: Come, come!!!*

*They take me to the corridor where the two icons of the wolf and the Little Red Riding Hood are*

*Dafni: Look.....can you see the bad wolf!*

*Angeliki Oh yeah you are right there is a wolf here*

*Dafni: Look what she did to the girl!*

*Angeliki: What?*

*Dafni: She ate her leg!!*

*Angeliki: Oh yeah you are right!!*

*Aspasia: Hey the wolf bit her and she lost her shoe.*

*Angeliki: Ah but.....even the wolf is without a leg ...what happened?*

*Maria gestures “I don’t know”*

*Angeliki: Do you think the girl did that to him?*

*Aspasia and Maria: Noooooooooo the wolf did it!*

*Dafni: and his nose is broken*

*Angeliki: Ohhhh yeah.....what about the nose...hmmmmmm maybe the hunter?*

*Aspasia: Noooooooooooooooooo the wolf!!*

*Angeliki: Something has been happened here for sure .....but you don’t know eh?*

*Aspasia: The wolf ate her*

*Angeliki: Aaa I understood.....*

*At that moment there was a knocking sound from the door of the events room that usually is locked and access is not permitted. The three girls appear petrified and start running away while Dafni shouts ‘the wolf the wolf the wolf!’ Christos and Panayiotis come to see if Dafni is alright. I open the door... The lift was under repair so a group of children coming from upstairs through that door. I go back to the table while Dafni wants to go to see the wolf as she said, he has gone through that door.*

(10<sup>th</sup> February ‘The wolf the wolf the wolf!’, DM200059 audio)

**§9. Event ‘I walk in the forest when the wolf is not here!’ video data**

Maria is asking for practitioner to play the game ‘I am walking in the forest when the wolf is not here’

Maria: That one with the wolf!!

Practitioner: With the wolf?

Maria: Yes(she nodded)

Aspasia starts jumping said 'with the wolf with the wolf!' then she is going close to Maria and she is telling 'you are not gonna do it' 'I will do it!' 'No...you don't!' practitioner is asking the two girls whether they are ready. 'Yes' the two girls are answering. Practitioner and children are singing 'I walk on the forest when the wolf is not hear...wolf, wolf are you here?' And the wolf -practitioner is telling them 'I am putting on my shirt!' making the wolf's voice. Children all the time are singing they are walking around. When the wolf is speaking they stop hearing what she is going to say and acting respectively. The game continues until the time the wolf to take his stick and start chasing the children. (2:48min) The wolf-practitioner is chasing the children and she is catching Eleni(2:49) 'She become a wolf as well' practitioner is telling her. 2:45 Maria stands up in front of her waiting to catch her. She is not moving. However practitioner does not catching her 'mmhmmh' Maria is telling and crossing her hands on her chest.(she is upset).Practitioner is going and sitting with Eleni. Christos, Dafni and Anastasios are following her 'me too' (he means to sit with you). Christos is telling her while Anastasios is taking the chair to sit 'I didn't catch you yet...when I will catch you...Anastasia, Anastasia noo noooo don't turn it' practitioner is telling them. Anastasios is leaving 'we are starting again' practitioner is telling while the children are quiet. Panayiotis all this time is quiet. Then the game start from the beginning 'I walk in the forest when the wolf is not here, wolf wolf are you here?' Maria, Anastasia, Christos, Anastasios and Panayiotis are walking around singing the song and following the instructions. (3:41) 'aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa' Anastasios is doing and speeding.'aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa' Maria is telling as well 'aaaaaaaaaaaa' Aspasia is screaming and speeding as well. Then she is going close to Maria and she is telling 'don't shout!!' Aspasia is telling to Maria and she is slapping her, Maria is not playing anymore. She is turning her back, she put her head down and she is crossing her hands. She is standing up. Aspasia goes and asked for her to join them 'Come come' touching her shoulder but Maria refused and stand up turned her back on the children and practitioner. 4:19 practitioner continues to sing while Aspasia goes and sitting on the single mattress. Only Panayiotis, Anastasios and Christos are walking around, singing 4:30 Aspasia goes back to join them but Maria is still standing up without participate.4:35 Christos is sitting down on the mattress and he switch on the camera. Practitioner continues to sing 4:50 Christos stands up taking pictures of her. Practitioner is singing 'I am taking my stick and I am chasing you!' and she goes and grasps Maria. Maria is getting upset while practitioner is forcing her to speak. Maria refused to give any answer and she lying down on single mattress. All of them now are going to support her. Christos has been taken pictures of the

event. Practitioner stops the game to ask what the problem was. Maria refused to answer to her.

(10<sup>th</sup> February *'I walk in the forest when the wolf is not here!'* MOVO6624, video data )

**§10.** *'The wolf is a painful story for us. For him is something deterrent. I don't know from where this has been started but that fact that has been problematical for him...ohh yes he is thinking a lot about that. Even the game 'I walk, I walk in the forest' he does not like it at all.....he does not like but (as you mention that you saw him to play it)....I don't know if he plays because the rest peers are doing it'*

Mentioned to parent the fact the child refused to make any comment on the video she said:  
*'It is strange because every time we watch family's videos he is really excited and he makes comments "do you remember....remember".. Maybe watching the videos from the day care centre for him are something bored ...this child is getting easily bored'*

#### **§11. Maria's and Aspasia's comments**

*Maria: Eehheehy where am I?*

*Aspasia: Here you are! it is also me!*

*They started laughing*

*The video was focused on the time they were trying to find their den*

*Angeliki: Can I ask you something girls?*

*Maria and Aspasia: Yeap*

*Angeliki: I though your den was under the table, wasn't it?*

*Aspasia: Noooo cos Miss is going tell off us*

*Angeliki: it is not permitted anymore?*

*Maria: Nooo cos Miss is telling off us*

*Angeliki: And then?....where is now your den?*

*Maria: It s me...(looking at the video)... I will tell you where is our den...our den is far away....really far away ...You cannot see it not even to touch it*

*Angeliki: Really?!?!?! Is it here in the school?*

*Maria: Nope....it is there on the mountain!*

*Aspasia: We can fly because we have got wings (Aspasia)*

*Angeliki: Really?*

*Aspasia: Yes...wings and scissor!!*

*Angeliki: That is nice!*

*I show them the scene with the baby*

*Angeliki: And could you tell me about the babies?*

*Both of them: Yeaas*

*Angeliki: Why did you take them here?*

*Maria: Because...because we felt tired with the wolf (Maria)*

*Angeliki: And you wanted your babies?*

*Maria: All the time playing with the wolf!!! It is right you thing? (She is speaking in a particular upset way)*

*Angeliki: Aaaah is it boring some times?*

*Maria: It is boring!!! (Again upset)*

*Aspasia: My mum went to the supermarket and she found a bad wolf*

*Angeliki: She found a wolf?*

*Aspasia: A fake one*

*Angeliki: Well...this means that when you brought the kitchen stuff and the dolls you were tired?*

*Maria: We felt tired to play for such a long time that game....do you think it is right?*

*And the way she told me that was particular rhetorical and my only answer it was*

*Angeliki no you are right that was not right ....*

(16FG 'All the time playing with the wolf!!! It is right you thing?' audio DM200097 and field notes).

## **Section 4.2 (Greek Case)**

### **§1. Event 'That is my car' video data**

*Christos: Look here!!! Look here!! Our little cars....you did not make them because on that day you were not here!*

*Dafni: No!! I have got that one, the pink (pointing to the board)*

*Christos: No the pink!! It is not now!! Aspasia has done the pink one!*

*Dafni: No!! She does not have! (All of the children look at the board)*

*Panayiotis: The green one is mine!*

*Aspasia: I have got the pink now!*

*Dafni: I h a v e gotttt it!!(She is answering raising up her voice)*

*Aspasia: Nooo!! that is mine! (Aspasia)*

*Dafni: I have got!!....here up there (Dafni shows with her hand the car- 24:53min)*

*Christos: The red?*

*Dafni: Yes!!!*

*Aspasia: No the red!! ....that red is not mine, it is Elenis*

*Christos: Noo!! It is Elenis*

*Dafni: Nooooooooo!!!!*

*Eleni: That is mine !!*

*Dafni: Noooo....here this one!! (she is stepping on the chair and she is trying to show them the car-25:32min)*

*Aspasia: Put the chair closer to see*

*Panayiotis: This one the green is mine!*

*Aspasia is helping her to place the chair close to the wall*

*Dafni: This one ....no this one, with these wheels!(she is trying to stress her body to touch the car -26:01min). .....(the discussion continues with Dafni stepping on the table but practitioner make a notice to her. Initially Dafni ignores her but practitioner insists that she has to get down from the table. Finally, Dafni is getting down. The discussion continues while Dafni steps again on the chair trying to convince her friends).....*

(6FG 'That is my car' MOVO6571, video data)

## **§2. Practitioner's Vera comments on the 6FG 'That is my car' MOVO6571**

*'We normally make the crafts for the children to understand what we are talking about. It is like a summary. For instance on the car crafts children stick windows and wheels to understand the parts of the car. I cut all the parts, I put them glue on particular parts and they stuck the pieces. It is also a way to show to parents that here we are not offering just baby sitting but....we contribute on their own learning. I don't think that at this age can do something more than that. I can not also give them scissor because I am scared about their safety'. (Practitioner Vera)*

## **§3 Event 'which car is yours?' audio data**

*Angeliki: Which aeroplane is yours Christos? Is it the red? (2:20min)*

*Christos: Noo it is the green*

*Angeliki: The green!!! Yeah...but here Christos is written on the blue!!*

*Christos: No this one (the green)*

*Angeliki: Are you sure about that?*

*Christos: Yes!*

*Angeliki: And now the little car! Which one is yours? Is it the brown?*

*Christos: No it is the blue*

*Angeliki: Hey!! You find straight away!!!*

(6<sup>th</sup> February audio data, 'which car is yours?' DM200038 audio data)

#### **§4 Maria's mother comments on handicrafts 1**

*'Why do they place the crafts in such a high position? The child wants to show and touch what she has done!!!! .....nooooo.....but for sure she recognises her own work....as you said she did not manage to recognise her work except the car.....of course she didn't it!!! If she had cut it by herself she would have remembered!!!!....At home we mix all their work and she remembers everything!! She remembers even the mistakes she made cutting by herself .....All these are not cut by the children!! What can you understand from these??....What has the child done? Everything is the same ....there is nothing different!'* (Maria's mother interview).

#### **§5. Maria's mother comments on handicrafts 2**

*'Children need to be occupied with something more important....ok... for how long they can play with the equipment they provide the kids!! I am pretty sure she is feeling bored. Maria uses to bring at home some crafts during the carnivals period. She brought at home one mask and one hat....ok....for me that can be more than enough!! But... what about the children? I don't think so ....and I will tell you why...in the beginning I though children were occupied in a creative way afterwards I realise they were not doing anything! Maria as every child need to be OCCUPIED! She wants to make things!!....she is coming back from the school and.....whatever she can not make in the school she asked to do it at home.....she asked straight away.....scissor, glue, the paper to stick on the top and plasticise!!....and I am asking her "come on!! Maria!!! You don't feel tired!!! You were so many hours at the school...you are not doing such a kind of things there!!" and she is answering to me "I want more!" I am guessing that..... there, she did not make what she wants to do for herself to feel satisfied'. (Maria's mother interview)*

#### **§6. Maria's mother comments on handicrafts 3**

*'She cuts a lot at home....she cuts, she sticks, and she is doing crafts not complete but ...she can take pieces of paper from the Lottery and Jokers. She is making boats for her dad, she is sitting and sticking with the glue and after she is giving them as a present to her dad or mum, she likes to make such kinds of things very much, but what makes sense to me is that every time she is back from the school she is asking again and again.....sometimes she takes the cellotape and she places her work on*



*the door, they are there. She can see them and she can show them to us...* (Maria's mother interview).

**§7 Event 'Show me my hat', Field notes**

*I was transferring some data on my laptop so as to empty the memory stick of the children's camera. Maria comes close to me:*

*Maria: Did you see my hat?*

*Angeliki: Your hat?*

*Maria: Yes, over there. It is that one with the small balls on the top (Maria stretches her body trying to show me the hat that is on the top of the cupboard)*

*Angeliki: Aaaah that hat over there was yours? I was wondering who the owner of this nice hat is!*

*Maria: Show me which one do you mean?*

*Angeliki: That one with the flower. Right?*

*Maria: That's right....do you like it?*

*Angeliki: Yes a lot!! Did you make it?*

*Maria: No...but it is for me*

*Angeliki: Do you know who did it for you?*

*Maria: Yes! Miss Vera*

*Angeliki: What about you? Do you know how to prepare hats?*

*Maria: Yes I know*

*Angeliki: Would you like to prepare one by yourself?*

*Maria: Yes....but.....miss Vera will be tell me off for that*

*Angeliki: Aaaah! That's why you are not doing your own hat by yourself!*

*Maria: Yes...that's why!*

(4<sup>th</sup> of February, 'show me my hat' Field notes )

**§8. Event 'that one with the flower is mine!'**

*Aspasia: That one with that thing on the back it is not yours that one with the stars is Elenis*

*Maria: That one with the flower is mine!!!!!! (Maria is asking her being upset!)*

*Aspasia: Aaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa yeas!*

*Maria: And this one is Dafnis then? (she is indicating the hat practitioner is preparing at that moment for Anastasios )*

*Maria: Eeeeh??? Dafnis? Dafnoulas? Maria repeats while Aspasia is not answering to her*

*Maria: This one ? (she is asking her again)*

*Aspasia: Yes this one, it is not!! (Practitioner has told them before she was preparing Anastasios one)*

*Aspasia: It is not!!*

*Maria: Something else could be then!*

*Aspasia: It is not yours that one with the stars*

*Maria: And this one with the flower?!?!?*

*Aspasia: That one is yours*

*Maria: Yes it is mine*

*(Maria 4<sup>th</sup> February 'that one with the flower is mine!' MOVO6560 video)*

### **§9. Event 'You are going to do the same!'**

*Practitioner Vera is looking at some crafting books and she has put out some papers and equipment for making some crafts. Maria goes and sits with her. She observes her. Then Maria stretches her hand and she is about to take the scissor, she touches it. The practitioner prevents her by picking up the scissor and places it on a drawer. Maria does not say anything (1:25) then she follows practitioner when she goes and sit at a table. Anastasios comes to join them. He observes practitioner as well. Maria shouts to Anastasios saying:*

*'The same Anastasie!!' (1:34)*

*'The same.....' Anastasios is telling her in a calm way. He is looking at her and he is using the same tone of voice as Maria.*

*'The same Maria!!!!'*

*'You are not going to do it!!!' (Maria says being upset). Christos comes and he says*

*'You!! The same!!' (Christos)*

*'And you the same!' (Anastasios says 1:46)*

*(12FG 'You are going to do the same!' MOVO6682 video)*

### **§10. Event 'fights before starting 1',**

*Children were playing. Practitioner is telling them that they can sit if they want on the table playing with plasticise Maria, Aspasia, Panayiotis, Eleni and Dafni are going and sitting on the table. Anastasios and Christos were still on the carpet area.*

*Eleni: I want the pink one!*

*Aspasia: me too!!*

*Eleni: NO!*

*Aspasia: YES!*

*Eleni: no and no! Me as well!!!*

*Aspasia: Nooooooooooooo!*

*Eleni: Iiiiiiiiiiiiiii!(and she waves hysterically the two pieces of paper they were in front of her. Maria is looking at them and she said screaming*

*Maria: Iiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiii!!!!(Maria is shouting with her whole strength)*

*Panayiotis: Iiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiii!!!!(Panagiotis is telling with lower voice)*

*Dafni: Iiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiii!!!!*

*Maria: Iiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiii!!!*

*Aspasia: Miss I want the pink one!*

*Practitioner: I can't understand what are you telling me because there is too much noise!*

*Panayiotis: Iiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiii!!!!*

*Practitioner:.... and I cant understand.....!!!*

*Maria: meeee tooooooo!!!*

*The noise is so loudly that for a certain point the transcription is difficult to take separate the voices. There is a strong argument.*

*Aspasia:I want the pink!!!*

*Practitioner: hold on a minute!*

*Maria: NO I will take it!*

*Practitioner: As long as you sit on the table....just a minute I understood that you want to play with plasticise, let me finish with the water and I will give you what you need, there is no need to scream, you don't need to scream your throat is going to be in a pain ...( Practitioner start hand out the plasticise. Once the children took their plasticise they were quite doing their creatures. Anastasios and Christos join them as well. Practitioner is giving to them some tools to work with the plasticise).*

(1<sup>st</sup> December 'fights before starting' MOVO5861, video data )

**§11.** For instance, in videos 3DG MOVO5946-MOVO5947 the practitioner has asked the children to sit at the table and finish the Christmas ornaments. The practitioner appears to have control of the whole activity. She delivers children's aprons, she helps them to put on, she hands out the play dough reading child's names, she even puts on the tray two colours gold and silver and decides what the quantity children can use. The video data shows that every time the practitioner is trying to hand out the equipment children are arguing. The children follow the practitioner's direction who politely request to sit on the table if they want but in the whole event there is an atmosphere of nagging and demanding. The children said 'I wanttttt' but at the same time they are speaking loudly and with nagging way, demanding their turn soon. The practitioner stops many times to deliver the items and she asked for children to be quiet as in the foyer they have the chance to play

and run. She makes a distinction between the play (in the foyer) and work (which is the preparation for the decorated items for the Christmas trees). When after the 4:47 minutes the practitioner delivers the equipment to the children, none of the children were complaining or nagging any more. It seems that the children do not agree with the way the resources are accessible to them. The reality is that the children only have access to some toys placed in the pedagogical corners but the majority of the equipment is under the adult's control. The CD player with the music, the books, the paper for drawing, the crayons, and the plasticine is placed at a high level so the children have to ask a practitioner before taking it.

***Event 'I want tooooooo!'*, video data (part of the 'Fighting before starting 2')**

*All of the children are sitting on the table wearing their aprons. Practitioner is giving them a small tray for the colour. Aspasia is telling her which craft wants. Maria is complaining that she want her own too.*

*Maria: I waaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaant it tooooooooooooooo*

*Practitioner is bringing the tray with the creatures on the table. Aspasia and Dafni are stretching their hands trying to grasp the play dough crafts.*

*Practitioner: hold on a minute to check the names! That is Elenis...*

*Practitioner is telling. Aspasia is complaining that she wants the heart....*

*1:19 Maria starts nagging raising her hand on the tray that practitioner is keeping on her hands. Practitioner explains to Dafni what exactly they are going to do. Some of the children on the background start knocking the ornaments on the table while others are asking for their items. Maria is nagging again.*

*1:35*

*Maria: I wanttttt tooooooooooooooooooo!*

*Aspasia: nottttt meeeeeeee!!*

*Maria: Meeeeeeeeee!!*

*Aspasia: Meeee tooooooo afterrrrrr okkkk?*

*Children now are knocking the ornament stronger*

*Practitioner she is telling them-1:46 "they are going to break!! Let me tell you something. You told me that you WANT to do it. Could you please make what you want quiet?". Maria raises her hands on practitioner for her items.*

*Practitioner: I didn't force you to do it, I said whoever wants! As long as you want please be calm you don't need to be upset neither to fight!*

*Children do not answer to her. Practitioner is hanging out the items. Maria is waiting for her turn..... Maria is complaining again*

*Maria: I want the brash!! ( Looking at the same time her star)*

*Dafni has got two ornaments and she starts counting them*

*Christos: I want two toooo (he is complaining)*

*Maria: I want brash toooo (she is complaining again)*

*Practitioner: shush!!!*

*Practitioner start to hung out them the brushes telling them*

*Practitioner: shoushsssss, you play, you run and you use your energy in the foyer!!! Now I want nice and calm to finish with our work!! without being in a hurry and without shout out!....ok? there are colours and brushes for everybody!! There is no need to fight and shout out*

*None of the children is answering to her. Practitioner is bringing two different colours the silver and the cold. In the meanwhile Dafni starts dancing in the rhythm of the song. They are start laughing with Christos*

*(3:54)Maria: I want such a thing!*

*Panayiotis: I want silver*

*Christos: I want such a colour*

*Maria: meeee toooooo*

*Practitioner: do you want the gold?*

*Maria: mmmmmm (yes)*

*Practitioner: nice .....you will make it from the other side not this one that is already silver!! Not on the top of the silver from the other side that is gold (practitioner)*

*Maria: I wantttt ittt as welll such (a colour) ....the other*

*Panayiotis: I want that one , the other one the grey I want!*

*Practitioner: ok Panayioti*

*Christos: I want that one!*

*Panayiotis: I wantttt the silverrrrr.....i want the silver!!!*

*Practitioner is going to give colour to the rest of the children. Maria is painting her star.*

*(4:47)When practitioner gave the materials to all children there was quiet in the room.*

*Maria is painting her stars nobody is speaking in the room. You can just hear on the background the music that is coming from the other classroom*

*5:22 Practitioner is giving to Maria the second star*

*(3<sup>rd</sup> December 'I want tooooooo!' MOVO5946-47 video data)*

### **Section 4.3 English Case**

### § 1. Event: 'The spaghetti' video data

*Practitioner Caroline is putting the boiled spaghetti into the tray. Jennifer is standing up looking at what the practitioner is doing. The practitioner sprinkles the boiled spaghetti with some small raw pasta. 'What are you doing?' (Present moment 00:14) Jennifer asks the practitioner. 'What are you doing?' she repeats to her. The practitioner does not answer. She continues to sprinkle the pasta. Jennifer stands up and looks at her. The practitioner puts down the plastic bag with the pasta and she picks up some glitter. Jennifer goes closer and she asked her again 'What are you doing?' 'I put some glitter in!' the practitioner says, and she starts to sprinkle the pasta with that. Jennifer looks at her. She is about to stretch out her hand. She looks at the glitter that falls down and she starts laughing. (Photo 1 present moment video still (00:40)). When the practitioner is finished sprinkling she bends her down to smell the mixture (photo2 present moment video still 00:55). Jennifer turns to the practitioner and she asks her 'What are you doing with that?' 'Do you like the smell? Put your sleeves on' the practitioner says. Jennifer puts her sleeves on and she touches the spaghetti (photo 3 present moment video still 1:10). 'Ohh how is that feeling?' the practitioner asks her, Jennifer does not answer but she touches the pasta again and again. Her face looks to be disgusted (photo still 4 present moment 1:27) 'Is that good?' the practitioner asks her. She does not answer, she is having another go. 'Look at that!' Jennifer says to practitioner showing her hands 'Sparkling!' the practitioner says. Jennifer puts her hands into the pasta again and picks up taking some pieces in her fingers. She scoops the pasta with her hands and then she throws it down again. She takes one piece of spaghetti in her hands and shows it to the practitioner 'Look spaghetti!' 'It was!' The practitioner does not answer her. She spends more time feeling the pasta and looking at the glitter into the tray. The practitioner leaves the activity while Jennifer puts her hands into the cooked spaghetti again checking the glitter. The practitioner puts some music on the CD player. Jennifer turns her head to see where the music is coming from (2:50). She looks at me laughing (photo video still 5 present moment 2:51) She continues the activity with the spaghetti trying to hear at the same time the music as practitioner has put the volume down. She keeps touching the pasta with her hands. She finds a small piece of raw pasta, she turns it with her fingers, and then she brings it in front of her nose. She smells it, (photo video present moment-still 6: 3:36) her face is disgusted, (3:38) she throws it down 'blich' she says and she moves one step away from the tray (photo video still present moment 3:41 ). She tries to put every piece of spaghetti into the tray and she looks at Ian and Ben - they are in front of the CD player and they are laughing. She cleans her hands on her cardigan and she goes over to join Ben and Ian at the CD player (4:00).*

**§2.** *Jennifer has got to get involved with this. This is messy play. Anything to do with messy play, anything... Painting, flubber, play-dough. Anything she can get her hands into. That's quite her. She is quite happy if her hands are getting dirty. That's why I think she likes anything: the mud in the garden, the sand, it's just something she can get her hands into and really manipulate it I think, yeah definitely. I think you can tell by her face if she is happy or whether she is sad. Definitely, because she got that little face, hasn't she? Her eyes are quite sparkly and she is quite happy by looking at her. But if she is not happy with something, she'll like push you away or push the other children away and things like that. Using good body language, definitely (Practitioner Caroline). Yes I have involved children in setting up but on this occasion I was observing and reflecting on Jennifer's spontaneous play e.g. How the pasta and glitter was falling.... Respond to what Jennifer sense, hears, smells touches and feels with textures, hard, rough, smooths, sticky. She explored by repeating movement with hands to make patterns by touching, smelling scooping and pouring from hands, using language to communicating with staff. Jennifer used to increasing control over the pasta, by touching, pushing, patting, throwing, catching showing imagination also learning social skills enjoyed being with and talking to adults expressing facial movement by smiling. Next time..... I will encourage child to set up there own active, experiment with other textures to create new effects.*

*(Practitioner Caroline interview)*

**§3.** *She could have let Jennifer put some of that in. (Sighs) She was engrossed then, really engrossed and it doesn't really matter if she has an apron on. They don't know when to intervene and extend the children's activity and when just to leave it alone. I mean the thing with the apron with Jennifer. Jennifer was really into that and she wasn't going to get in that much of a mess. It's not like it was paint. And if she needed an apron, it would have been done first before she started to play with it because it broke that concentration. It might have been the music that helped break the concentration, but at least that was a positive interruption.*

*(Practitioner Martha interview)*

**§4. Event 'Preparing the corner with practitioner', video data**

*(4:39) Jennifer leaves the activity. She goes to the water tray and she plays with the water and the jug there. Jennifer comes back (8:31). She keeps hold of the red water twister and she pours water into the mix.... (8:51) she leaves (9:11) keeping the water twister in her hands. Practitioner Carly comes over and adds some more cornflour (10:58) Jennifer*

comes back again with the water twister full of water. Jennifer is about to pour the water. 'We need to mix first Jennifer'. Jennifer ignores what the practitioner says and she pours the water into the tray (present moment 11:00) 'Jennifer!' the practitioner says. 'We are going to have mix first' the practitioner tells her. Jennifer gets her sleeve wet trying to pour the water into the tray. 'What happened?' the practitioner asks her. 'Go and ask Emma to change it' Jennifer takes one step back (present moment) and some water from the jug falls out. 'Don't throw the water down, pick it up' the practitioner tells her. Jennifer lets all the water pour out (present moment video still 9 11:14). 'Noooo Jennifer Noooo!' (11:17) the practitioner says. Jennifer looks at the practitioner (present moment). She takes one step back keeping the jug in her hands. Betty asks the other practitioner to put the water back in the water tray and take Jennifer for changing (11:35) (video still 11:14) (24 of April, 'The play dough' MOVO3011 video data)

#### **§5. Event:** 'The Twister' video data

It is circle time, practitioner Carly has asked the children to sit down on the carpet. Jennifer goes straight to the drawer and looks for something. Ian leaves the carpet where the circle time is taking place and he runs to where Jennifer is (present moment photo video still 10). He found a toy there, 'Right!! Come on!! Look everybody!!! What time is it now?!' the practitioner tells them 'Aaaakalaaljalafjsgklgj' children are making a noise 'Circle time!! And in the circle time we need to sit down on the rug .....Anny off the bookshelves please!' practitioner says. Ian picks up the small toy in his hand. (present moment photo video still 11- 0:16) He keeps it in his hands to hide it 'Come and sit down!' the practitioner tells him. He makes one step back and then he sits on the carpet. Jennifer finds the twister with the smiling faces and she walks towards the practitioner (0:26 present moment ). She smiles at her raising the twister 'Jennifer put that away please,!' showing her where she should place it. Jennifer does not move, she keeps the twister in her hands. Her face is serious now (present moment video still 12-00:37. She looks at me showing the twister 'Put it back in the drawer!' the practitioner tells her again. (00:51) Jennifer goes back to the drawer. She does not put the twister in the drawer. She sits on her knees and she unfolds the twister (present moment video still 13- 1:06), the practitioner gets up and goes to bring her back. Practitioner grasps the twister. She folds it and she asked for the rest of the children to leave from there closing with eager the drawer.

(14<sup>th</sup> of April 'The Twister' MOVO2884, video data)

**§6.** 'Jennifer, Ian... come here!' practitioner Betty is telling them. Ian was getting down from the stairs slowly looking around while Jennifer was crawling on the carpet coming



*closer to me (3:37) practitioner starts singing the 'hello' song while Ian is still standing up on the last stair of the tower . 3:53 another practitioner goes and shows to Ian to go and sit down. Ian goes and sit down on the carpet. Jennifer is coming close to me, I am trying to go closer to the carpet area so as to convince Jennifer to join the circle. 4:22 Ian looking that Jennifer is close to me , he stands up and he comes and sit close to me as well. Jennifer is not coming closer but she goes and be occupied with the routine cards she found on the top of the cover tray. 4:45 Ian join her as well. Jennifer is coming close to me again 4:51 'Ian come and sits down please!' practitioner is telling him. Ian goes and sits down 'how many times I have to tell you!' 'Sit down please!!' I am taking Jennifer on my arms as once practitioner makes a notice to Ian she raises her hands on me. I am going keeping my camera on the circle. 'Jennifer! Come here!' Betty practitioner is telling her raising her hands to take her on her hands. I am going and sit down on the carpet. Jennifer is sitting close to me. Then she goes and pock the leg of practitioner Carley 'what do you want?' she is telling her. Jennifer is not answering to her and goes on Betty's arms. (5:56). Practitioner Carley shows them the routines cards make sure that they have understood that is singing time. She is asking for the children to do the gesture of the singing time. Ian and Jennifer they are just looking without doing the gesture. Practitioner is asking them to choose one song. Jennifer and Ian are not answering to her. Another child has decided about the 'postman cat'.*

(14<sup>th</sup> of April 'The Twister' MOVO2884, video data)

**§ 6.** *Ian is standing up watching without doing the gestures. He is listening to the song (present moment video still photo17- 6:44) Ian is laughing (6:55). Ian leaves and goes to the kitchen while Jennifer does what the song requests. (8:09) The song has finished. 'Again!' Jennifer says 'Again?' the practitioner asks her. She goes and puts on the song. In the background (8:19) Ian and Allan are standing up looking at what the practitioner is going to do while Allan is moving his hand up. (Video still photo 18 present moment 8:24) Once the song starts all the children except Ian and Allan are following the instructions as the song requests. Ian goes close to Allan and they start laughing (video still photo 19- 8:31)*

(28<sup>th</sup> of February 'Clap your little hands' MOVO2161 video data)

**§7.** *'They loved it....they loved it!' The practitioner tells me 'I never though about that!! I brought the CD thinking 'let's put some music...four times four times....and they still wanted it.....' normally we are not putting music thinking that some children having restriction due to religious beliefs, for instance Ian. His mother has been converted to*

*Muslim and we know that they do not let them dance...but he enjoys it...' (Practitioner Caroline comments in Field notes)*

### **§8. Event 18<sup>th</sup> March 'Clap your little hands circle time', video data**

Jennifer is walking and goes close to the CD player. She is stretching her body and she is trying to reach the CD player (video still-00:01) she can not. She goes on the other side stretching her hands (video still-00:03) the next song starts and Jennifer is running away while practitioner was coming to prevent her for touching the CD player 'Jennifer!!' practitioner is telling. Jennifer is moving on the big table again standing up and waiting for practitioner to put the song again. All the children were looking at practitioner that was putting the 'clap your little hands!'. Once the song starts Ian is sitting down playing with the car while the rest of the children are clapping their hands as the song said. Carley is having a technical problem with the camera and she can not take the video as she wants. The other practitioner stops the song and when Carley is ready to video film, the other practitioner is starting the song since the beginning. Children are looking confused once at the practitioner on the CD player and once at the other practitioner (1:08) (video still). After that except Carl the rest of the children start taking their coats from the rocking chair being distracted by practitioner chatting on the background that was so loudly that on the video barely you can hear the song. On the background children are fighting with their coats while practitioner is focus on the child on the foreground that obviously enjoys the song. (1:59) while gradually more children are leaving. By the 2:28 min only Carl was doing the gestures while the rest of the children were moving from one place to another. The background of the video is too noisy and many of the children had put on their coats standing up.

(18<sup>th</sup> March 'Clap your little hands circle time' MOVO2524, video data)

On the field notes : after practitioner stops in the middles the song. Jennifer goes closer to the CD player trying to reach again the CD. She is looking at practitioners and she stands up. She is sitting on the chair and she is not doing anymore the gestures of the song. She is destructed from practitioners comments.

### **§9. Event 'The Jar and the milk', video data**

*Jennifer is still at the big table where the snack was taken place before. The glasses, the bottles and the plates with the knives are still in place. The practitioners start tidying up the table. Jennifer looks around at the glasses. She checks where there is left over milk and water. She picks up the orange glass and she finds the empty bottle of milk. She pours the*

milk into the bottle precisely. No milk is spilt out of the bottle. (video still ) . She leaves the empty glass and she takes another one. She repeats the same process: she pours the milk slowly into the same bottle without spilling any. She puts the orange glass down and looks around for more milk in the glasses next to her. She moves to the other side of the table and picks up the blue glass. The blue glass has water in it. She pours the water into the bottle. She finishes with that and she looks around to check what is left. She looking at the blue glass. A bit of water is left; she picks it up again pouring the last drops into the bottle. She finds another one. She takes the green glass and pours it into the bottle. Then she takes the yellow one repeating the same process. The practitioner comes and grasps the bottle 'Nooooooooooo! We can.....' Jennifer tells her (1:20 present moment) 'Put it in the jar!' the practitioner tells her. 'Aaaaaahhhhhh!' (Present moment) Jennifer answers being frustrated and she was going to open the jar that was close to her. Practitioner Caroline helps her open the jar. 'Come on!' the practitioner says. Jennifer pours the glass with the milk in the jar with the water. 'Well done....good girl!' the practitioner tells her. 'Pop it here!' the practitioner says, showing her exactly where to place the empty glass. Jennifer places it where the practitioner indicates. 'Well done!!....is it there any more?' Jennifer picks up the other empty glasses and does as the practitioner asked, whilst at the same time the practitioner keeps her hand on the top of the lid (video still photo23 present moment) 'Thank you....thank you very much!' the practitioner says 'Well done!' 'One more there!' Jennifer tries to show to the practitioner which cup has something left in it 'Oufffff ...' Jennifer says, touching her face (video still photo present moment) 'Ok thank you would you like to bring those to the kitchen, knock on the door and say to Jacky 'Cups! Please!'' Jennifer takes the empty cups and walks towards the kitchen. She is not going back to the table. She goes to the grocery shop and takes the last toasted bread she found there and starts eating again, and then she moving on to the rocking chair. Other children are going to help the practitioner.

(28<sup>th</sup> of February 'The Jar and the milk' MOVO2163 video data)

**§10. Practitioner comments:** 'It's a shame, that bottle, she was pouring into the bottle. It's a shame that it went. Oh bless! So mean what are you to do? It was the same and it was pouring. But the hole was a lot bigger and she was only pouring into a tiny hole and she got it really good, to go into a big one, that's a real problem for her. But to leave, really she should have been left really with that bottle to carry on pouring, I mean. Definitely Yes, definitely and that's the same as the extending as well when we do like baking, biscuits and cookies and different things like that. With her mixing and the play-dough, she

*is extending her mind into doing all that the same as the pouring and things like that. They seem to enjoy tidying up the plates and tipping things into it and things like that, but when it's tidy up the toys they are not interested and that stems from home as well, because most of the children, parents will just tidy up for them instead of just giving them the chance to tidy up. Part of, I am thinking, what I do anyway, I say 'alright, take your plate into the kitchen'. Parents do that as well or they enjoy picking the cups up and taking them into the kitchen and it is a more better process. And it's another thing they stopped now, they don't do that now. Yeah, definitely. I think they do ignore us most of the time when they say tidy-up time whether that's the reason they stopped it now. I don't know. But they did really enjoy tidying up, didn't they?' (Practitioner's Caroline interview).*

### **§11. Event 'The traffic signs', video data**

*.....Nobody is listening to him. 'You cannot come!' he says again and shows the 'STOP!' sign. ( 3:06). 'No! you cannot come!' he repeats less loudly now. His facial expression shows that he is sad ( present moment). He goes to the other side. He looks at the signs. He stands up waiting.(3:18) He looks at the pedestrian sign and he starts screaming now 'STOP!!!!'. Nobody answers. He stands up waiting. (3:28 present moment) He indicates the sign again shouting 'STOP!!! Some children are riding bikes and pass in front of him 'STOP bikes!!! Stop bikes!' he repeats. Nobody answers him. (3:38) He runs away. He goes and takes a scooter. He rides the scooter screaming 'You cannot goooooo!!!' he stops in front of the sign saying 'You cant go!'. He tidies up the sign with 'STOP!'....(5:28) A girl comes over and she is about to take the sign with the pedestrians. Ian takes the other two signs and he moves them onto the other side. He goes back and he takes the third one. He placed them in front of the slide. Initially he placed the 'STOP!' sign in the middle. He checks and he moves the pedestrian sign in the row next to the works roads sign. He tidies them up them and says 'You cannot go!!! Stop!!' and he puts his palm out to gesture stop (- 6:20), Nobody answers him. He stands by the three signs and waits. (6:42). He repeats again 'STOP!' 'STOP!' 'STOP bike!' He looks at me. He takes my camera. (I thought he was irritated with me). He stops the video and he starts taking pictures of the signs saying 'Stop!! Stop bike!!!'*

(14<sup>th</sup> of July, 'The traffic signs' MOVO4932 video data).

**Practitioner's comments:** *'we lost a big opportunity to introduce them to the traffic regulations. That's so embarrassing! Nobody was there to support him!!!'*

(Practitioner Martha, interview)

## Section 4.4

### § 1. *Arthur's mother interview*

*'I like it at all. I think it is ideal for children to come and mixed with other children and it is always happy atmosphere and it is always lots happening and parents are getting well informed about activities and things so... yeah I like it at all really... I think lots to do. Lots of activities to keep him occupied and being outside obviously he loves that but as I said every time he comes here he is happy. There is always plenty of things that going on and I like when you walk in the room there is always lots for children lots of things to keep them busy and occupied there is always something on the table for them to do. There is always a lot of areas from them to go and play on different areas there is plenty of choice and that is good because they let them make their mind on what to do. He can choose his favourite activity' (Arthur's mother interview)*

### §2. Planned programme on the 17<sup>th</sup> June

#### Inside area:



#### Outside area



*§3. 'He's a very competent person anyway, his language is very good. He knows exactly what he wants. But I think he has got good boundaries at home as well. I think if they have got good boundaries at home it is half the battle. You know, and he loves to be out. When I spoke to his mom and it was a consultation, I asked her what his favourite activity was and she said to be outside in the garden. Obviously, he compares the two and he's quite content to be here. So for him, to be out in the garden here and out in the garden at home, there's a similarity there'.*

(Practitioner Caroline, Interview)

Similar to the practitioner his mother agrees:

*'He knows what he wants and if he see something and if he got the bike and he stands on that bike, He looks around to see what everybody else is doing and if he is someone like the video I saw yesterday with Caroline when Son was in front of him and Son stops Arthur stops as well and he waits and then they carry on scooting again together so he is very aware of what's going on around him and he does make a certain be like for a certain bike and he has a favourite bike at home as well he has three bikes but he always tends to stick to the same, the small scootable'.*

(Arthur's mother interview)

**§4.** *And yet, ain't it funny? He likes them conkers, but he never picked them up. There were the cones. You know the cones that I brought in? He never bothered with them and yet to me they are very very similar, cause they come off a tree, so, but I suppose he couldn't break them, so he would sit there, he was like crunching on the floor, but with solid... , it's like wood, a solid piece of wood..... He didn't touch it now, but he would pick up a conker and to me they are very very similar. So, that's strange.*

(Practitioner Caroline, interview)

**§5.** *It's not under the tree, natural. Yeah, could be, yeah because I have brought them in, so yeah. Probably if he was like walking through the park, because I had them from a tree, so there he might be aware, but usually you have to go on a chase to find them. They are not everywhere around here, so like you say, it could be because he has never really seen them. Not supposed to be in our garden. Yeah.*

(Practitioner Caroline interview)

**§6.** *That's why I said one tier. We needed like a cupboard to store the bikes, because to me, Arthur is coming to play group every day or three times a week and he is doing the same things over and over again, so if we got a lock-up, we wouldn't have the bikes out every day. Do you know what I am trying to say, because then he could try something new then. Exactly, because I think there is too much out sometimes and it just gets thrown about. But as I say now, we are firm, we have moved it, but we haven't got nowhere else to put it other than outside at the time. I don't think it helps them. Because there's too much; they look and there's just too much to be put away. And at the end of the day as well it comes down to often safety as well because it is*

(Practitioner Caroline interview)

### **§7. Event ‘No I want to play with my bike!’ Field Notes**

*(11.10) The children go outside. Arthur takes the bike and rides around as usual around. Caroline calls the children for face painting. Joel is going to have a spider on his hand. Ian and Allan look at what the practitioner was doing on Joel’s hand. They are sitting on their bike and scooter. ‘Do you want to have a try?’ the practitioner asks them. ‘No!’ Ian and Arthur say and leave with the bike and scooter. ‘Do you want to have a try?’ I ask Arthur. ‘No I want to play with my bike!’ Arthur answers me and he starts driving his car. ‘The Kids did not like it?!??’ practitioner Caroline says to practitioner Cally being surprised.*

*(17<sup>th</sup> June ‘No I want to play with my bike!’ Field Notes)*

### **§8. Event ‘Driving the bike 2’ video data**

*Arthur gets on a bike. He looks at Mark and Ian who are on the other side of the garden. He turns his bike. He looks at what a practitioner and some other children are doing close to the door. He starts driving he goes close to Ian and Mark (00:20). Ian and Mark are sitting on their bikes. ‘Are you working?’ Mark says to him ‘Right!’ Arthur answers him ‘Cos it’s time to work!’ ‘Right!’, ‘Back to work now!’ Arthur follows Mark riding his bike. Mark goes to the other part of the garden. He gets off his bike. Arthur stops waiting for him. Son goes and removes the green plastic dogs that close the road.....(3:39) He stops looking at the other children. He waits for them to pass. (4:03) He gets off his bike. He watches a child under the yellow tunnel and he goes there as well. He waits for the child to get out. He goes in smiling. He gets out. He repeats this sequence three times (4:37) He goes and looks into the room and then he goes back to the yellow tunnel laughing. He gets under the tunnel again. He finds a stick and he raises up his hand to show me ‘a stick!’ ‘Wow! What is that?’ ‘That’s a stick!’ ‘Where did you find?’ ‘I found down there!’*

*(8<sup>th</sup> July ‘Driving the bike 2’ MOVO4840 video data).*

**§ 9.** ‘It’s like he’s, well, that’s when I said to you when he said, when he got off his bike, and he says ‘I’ve got everything now’, it’s like he had been shopping. So that was his shopping, he has picked everything up then he is transporting it back home. And I suppose as well. We were in the garden a few times then stopping up again at the boat to have a look what the children’s did. It’s like him going to the park and you know, observing other children and doing what they want to do and playing and he is still standing there observing what they’re all doing, so yeah it’s the same, definitely’ ..... ‘Moving away, he’s going again, look! But you know what I think why he was interacting there, it was going

stop-go, it's part of the transport again. Cause before, it was like, yeah, he was just standing there looking at it, but until she said 'Jump on it', 'Stop', 'Go', 'Stop', 'Go', that's the things you do when you want to bike. And you stop at the lights, then you go again'.

(Practitioner Caroline interview).

#### **§10. Event 'Come let's go to find something green', Field Notes**

*Practitioner Betty is calling me in front of all children to help them to find something green. This is the second call for today and it was around 10:30 very close to the circle time. I was playing with Arthur and I am listening Betty having previously call children to find something green telling 'come Angeliki to help us to find something green'. 'Of course' I am telling and I said to Arthur 'come let s go to find something green'. Arthur is not answering to me. He is getting on his bike while he is taking different direction than mine. 'I am going to play with my bike' he is telling and he is leaving. I felt a bit stupid as Arthur once I start trying to find green items he ignores me following his on programme . I walk around from here to there saying 'I found something green!' In this way children such as Jimmy and John were activated but many others such as Ian, Allan and Arthur were ignored me. They keep playing with their bikes and scooter. (10<sup>th</sup> June, 'Come let s go to find something green', Field Notes).*

#### **§11. Event 'I like my scooter' Field Notes**

*Ian and Allan are observing the finger painting activity standing up on their scooter and bike respectively. Finally they do not participate. I found Allan playing with his scooter and I ask him 'Are you thinking to have a try with the finger paints?' 'Nooooooooo' Allan answers me and he said 'I like my scooter'. 'You prefer playing with your scooter?' 'Yeah.....noooo there, nooooo there...' and he showed me with his hands that he does not want to go and play with the finger prints. 'What about you Ian?' as Ian is coming close to us with his bike. 'Noooo....no' he said and he shook his head from the one side to another saying 'No'.*

(10<sup>th</sup> June, 'I like my scooter' Field Notes)

#### **§12 Event 'Pia pia!' Field Notes**

*Jennifer is asking for me to sit down on the chair and join them doing pizza. Children are preparing pizza. Allan has joined then as well. Being in the last stage of the preparation practitioner Betty is asking for children to pose for her to take picture with her mobile phone. Allan is going there wanted to have a picture as well with his pizza. However no*



picture was taken as practitioner was focus in other children. Jennifer's brother had on his hands the digital blue camera and he places on the table. Allan is taking the camera and he is looking at me 'Mummy!' he is telling me showing to me the digital camera. 'Do you need any help?' I am asking him 'yeahh!' he said smiling at me. I switch it on. 'Can you see your pizza here?' 'yeah'!! if you want to take a picture just click here!! Allan is keeping the camera looking through the screen he is turned right and left and then he is clicking the button.



**Figure: 24AE 'Pia -Pia!' Allan's picture**

'hahahhahahhaa....pia piaaaa!' he is telling but the pizza pictures has been disappear from the screen. 'pia?' Allan is telling looking at me confused. 'ok I can show you where is your pizza' I am telling him I turn the button of the preview. He is looking at the picture. He indicates with his finger the pizza. He is looking at the pizza. He is indicating the corn on the photo and then the corn on the plate which is on the table. He is showing me the mushrooms on the picture and then he is showing me the mushrooms on the plate. He is smiling. ' 'Pia! Pia!!..... Mine' he said. Practitioner is asking from him to put the pizza on the bag to take it at home. He is taking the camera and continues to watch the picture on the screen. He is cuddling the camera with the picture looking occasionally If the pizza picture is still there. He is going and sitting on the sofa. Simon is asking for the other camera. I am giving to him. Now they are sitting together on the sofa. More children are going looking at the pictures. Allan is looking all this time the picture of the pizza he took it.

(24<sup>th</sup> April "Pia -Pia!" Field Notes).

§13 The following pictures shows how the programme at the 10<sup>th</sup> of June was organised:



#### §14. Event ‘the grass is green’, Field Notes

*I was trying to find something green to give to the practitioner. Arthur was close to me ‘Look I found something really big and green!’ I say to him ‘What?’ he says to me. I show him the dragon. We pick up the dragon together and put on the red lid where the practitioner was putting the items. Then Arthur and Ian go over to the fence. ‘Look there is green there!’ he says looking through the fence. ‘Yeah I know all the grass is green!..’ we are silent, while in the background the practitioner keeps encouraging children to bring something green. ‘But look here there is a green streamer do you want to give it to Betty?’ I say to him. Arthur does not answer and he continues looking through the fence. ‘The digger is going to come today to do some work’ I say to him ‘I want to go there!’ he says and he points out the other part passing his hand through the fence. Ian is with us looking as well... they are looking through the fence. Ian grasps the digital blue camera from my hand. He stands up on his bike and he takes the following picture ‘But we have this green streamer do you want to take it and bring it to Betty’. I say to him, as I was a bit worried about staying here any longer as Betty started calling children to bring the lid inside. Ian and Arthur keep the streamer ‘Wait for us!! We found something more!!’ I say to Betty. We all went inside.*

(10<sup>th</sup> June, ‘the grass is green’ Field Notes)



**Figure 10JnE ‘the grass is green’ (Ian’s picture of the green grass)**

### **§15. Event ‘Rolling the blue car’**

*Ian is sitting at the table rolling the blue car on the top of the blue painting colour. He looks at me to make sure I am video filming him. He starts to roll the blue car again and smiles at me. (00:06sec) Then he takes the yellow car and he rolls it on the same plate-tray with the same colour. He rolls it slowly –slowly checking the wheels. He does this again and again changing the area on the plate. He stops – and looks to see why the practitioners were laughing.*

(14<sup>th</sup> April, ‘Rolling the blue car’ MOVO2907 video data)

### **§16. Event ‘Cartoon –Car’**

*Ian was holding with both hands on his cartoon – car. He walks around, he goes around he stands up on the big table. He takes one step to the water trays and then he goes into the kitchen area. He sits on his knees being still with the cartoon. He looks to see what the other children are doing in the kitchen. (The children have transferred the bottles and water from the water trays here). Jennifer is playing in the kitchen, Emma and Diana with Daniel as well. He observes them. He moves kneeling down around the table of the kitchen looking at what the other children are doing on the table.....(2:24) He kneels down again and moves in the opposite direction checking what the children are doing in the water trays.....(7 min)*

(15<sup>th</sup> April, ‘Cartoon –Car’ MOVO29 16 video data)

### **§17. Event ‘the white van’**

**Prior Events:** *Ian watches other children play with the sticky cornflour oats without being involved. Jennifer comes over keeping her hands on a white van. She is about to put the van in the tray with the cornflour dough but Betty asks her not to do it. She left the van on the floor. Watching that, Ian walks around (present moment). He goes and picks the white van up. He watches the other children more intensively now. Joe goes and puts a green car in the tray(present moment) Ian walks around again. Seeing that there was a car in the tray, he is animated; he still has hold of the white van. He is about to put it in the tray but he looks at*

*the practitioner suspiciously...(present moment)... He can see another green car on the carpet and he moves quickly and takes this car putting it on the tray and pushing it in the mixture.*

*(24<sup>th</sup> April 'the white van' MOVO3012)*

*MOVO3015: He picks up a yellow plastic car. He comes back and looks at the tray, he is about to place the yellow car in the tray. He stops when practitioner starts talking and saying to the children "It is sticky now, isn't?" he goes to the other part of the tray. He puts the yellow car on the dough (00:09)...He finally put the white van on the tray (1:09)..... (24<sup>th</sup> April 'The car in the sticky corn flour' MOVO3015).*

### **§18. Event 'Sitting on the small bike', video data**

*Ian is sitting on the small bike and he is trying to move it - pulling the steering wheel. Ian is still sitting on the bike while Allan is trying to move the wheelbarrow to the tree. Ian helps him (also I help Allan as he has asked for help). Allan stands up and he takes the wheelbarrow and walks around with it. Ian is sitting on the bike leaning with weight of the bike in one side. He is checks to see if the back wheel of the bike is moving around. He turns it again and again (1:11). He stays here looking Allan walking around with the wheelbarrow helping him occasionally when he needs to get on or off. Allan keeps walking around the tree with his wheelbarrow while Ian keeps checking his wheel if it works.*

*(13<sup>th</sup> May 'Sitting on the small bike' MOVO3610 - MOVO3612)*

### **§19. Event 'Bike in sand pile'**

*Ian is moving the bike forwards and backwards, looking intently at the sand. He moves his feet to push the bike back. Then he is drives the bike with his legs (without using pedals) going slowly -slowly close to the sand (00:27 sec) the front wheel of the bike goes into the sand. Ian looks at the practitioner. He moves the bike very slowly backwards. He keeps going back. (00:30) He smiles and says 'Ahiiiiiii ahiiiiiii diiiiiid!', making an effort to push his bike forwards in the sand pile. He stops as a child from the infant room tries to get into the sand area.*

*(24<sup>th</sup> June 'Bike in sand pile' MOVO 4687 video)*

### **§20. Event 'Bikes in sand pile' Field Notes**

*Ian is playing in the sand pit, the practitioner and the rest of the children leave. He goes and takes his bike. Ben follows with his bike. They move the bikes into the sand. 'I want a hammer.... a hammer.... a hammer' Ian says, while Ben is trying to remove the sand from the wheels. 'I can't put it out.... I cannot put it out, I cannot'. Ben says to me. 'You want*

*me to help you' I ask them. 'Yeahhh!' Ben says to me. I pick up the bike and I raise it up to move it from the sand 'NOooooo!' Ian says to me. He takes the bike and he places it in the sand once more. He sits on the bike 'I don't have a hammer!' he repeats. I can't understand what he is telling me. I look around to check if there is a hammer. I have never seen a hammer in the centre. 'I don't have hammer!!' Ian repeats and he stands up, moving his hands. 'I don't have hammer!' He says again. Ben tries to pull the bike out. 'I cannot pull it out!' he says. I pick up the bike and I pull it together with Ben following their instructions. Ian comes over as well and finally all together we manage to pull out the bike from the sand. They are driving around laughing'.*

(14<sup>th</sup> July "Bikes in sand pile" Field Notes)

**§21. Practitioners Comments:** *'But it's not for long (in another activity). Is it? He's back on his bike again.... That's why I say to you sometimes, I wish we could have moved the bikes and hid them so they couldn't see them, so then it would give them an opportunity to see something new, because if they are on the same thing all the while, they don't see anything else. So if there was no bikes there, he would say, 'oh' but if there was something else there to take his mind off it like a climbing frame or something like that, then I think then they would go and try them out. Because when the bikes are there, they are not interested, they just want to keep riding round and round, but then again if we had done that, there's some children who live in a flat who have got no outdoor play at all, then that is taking away from them again'.*(Practitioner Caroline, interview).

**§22. Practitioner's comments:** *'That's something that we never really do find out, what they do at home, is it different and it makes you wonder if they have got the freedom to do what they do here. I mean some parents, they don't like let them play or things like that do they? Some people just think they will put them in front of a television and sit. Not like, to get toys out and interact with their own toys and things like that. (Practitioner Caroline). (looking the videos of Ian with the car)You see, that's strange, because with sand and the mud, he's not afraid to touch it, or anything like that, but he didn't like the flour and the water at all. It was too messy. So it makes you wonder when they are at home. Even to like, bake a cake. The kids love to get their hands in and mix the flour and things like that, so you think they'd be used to having wet stuff. But obviously he's not because he weren't impressed with that mixture at all. There's definitely a connection with wheels and getting stuck in something' (Practitioner Caroline interview about Ian).*

**§23. Practitioner's comments:** *'But I think he would probably do that at home with his mom anyway. I have seen him going to the table to make cakes and things like that. But if*

*they can get outside, but his mom told me when I did the interview with her as well that he loves to be outside. If he can get up at 7 o'clock in the morning, he would be outside. And it's the same here. As soon as them doors open, coat on and he is outside going on the bikes' (Practitioner Caroline interview).*

**§24. Practitioner's Anna comments:** *'He was like daydreaming, licking his spoon, his fork and having a look around. I mean he wanted to be there, because he could have just gotten up and left or whatever, but he wasn't curious at all to think 'Ooh, sandwich, or do that, or Ooh what fun, I'd love some of that'. He wasn't as quite happy, he was just daydreaming, was he? Is there? I mean, I think he did better when an adult lead to talk to him, I think he would have done better. It was He didn't need anything for a long time. And he certainly didn't eat the bread, you know, or even put the cheese on. And then Chelsea put some more cheese on. I just think, with an adult, they left him on his own. He didn't eat the \_\_\_\_\_ on his own, he was waiting for somebody to say what are you doing or do you want some help or what you need. You know, 'want something else?' So he didn't interact with the people much, did he. I mean, Minney was making his sandwich and eating it as if he was doing it all his life. (laughs). But he was just looking around and wanted some interaction with an adult more I think, I don't know.*

*He doesn't know what to do with it really. He's waiting for an adult to help him, show him what to do, making sandwiches and even putting things together. And that gone wrong and then I think he saw other children reaching for the cucumber and said 'Oh , ok, I think I'll have some of that'.*

*He wasn't quite sure of what to do, you know, he would wait to be told what to do next. Or, 'we're gonna do this' but it was up to them to do what they wanted with that activity, rather than waiting for an adult to lead.... Well, not really, ..... Do you want some cheese. Do you want some lettuce? Some cheese, lettuce and giving it to Martha. We did ask, do you want this or do you want that, some did, some didn't. Some did ask, didn't they. They tried buttering it themselves, but some of them had got more help and buttered for all of them. And why adult-led? They wanted an adult to help you, perhaps for the one-to-one. You know, it was more adult led saying you have got a choice, perhaps they could have just got their plates and the bread themselves and lined up like a self-service line. (Practitioner Anna)*

**Practitioner's Martha comments:** *'But they've got nothing to stick. They have just got glue and paper. What are they supposed to do with it? There is no direct, there is nothing. You*

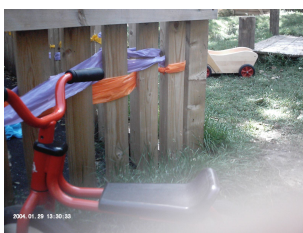
*see she has got the concentration, she has got the ability there to concentrate and do something but nobody is there to support her to do any more than that'.*

*'No, paint. It's paint. Because nobody has shown her that it is any different. See, she looks what was in the cup then but she doesn't know what to do with it. Nobody has explained to her. It's paint to her'. (Practitioner Martha).*

**§25. Practitioner's Martha comments:** *'Nobody is paying any attention to the children and the staff back there seem very loud to me and the children don't know what to do with it. There's nothing wrong with the children. It's because the staff are not extending and engaging and they are not interested in what the children are doing and how they could develop that. So, they should be looking at what he is interested in and encouraging him to take part. Not just thinking there is much trouble in leaving him to get on with it. That's what is happening. Because he is not causing any fuss or problem, so they are just letting him get on with it'. (Practitioner Martha interview)*

## **§26. Event 'Help! Help! Help!', Field Notes**

*Ian is playing on the boat with the sand. I was following Arthur with his bike. Practitioner Kate is trying to remove some toys that were blocking the door of the fence. She closed the door while the children were playing in the extended area of the garden, trying to remove the toy that is stuck in the door. Suddenly, I hear a child scream "Help! Help! Help! It was Ian who sees the door being closed and runs towards it. The practitioner opens the door and Ian (breathing heavily) tries to keep open the door of the fence by himself. At the same time he looks around to see if other children are playing in the garden. He stands up keeping the door open with his back. He is silent whilst looking around. He takes the camera from my hands and he takes one picture of the fence and one with the children playing in the sand pile whilst at the same time holding the door open with his back. Finally, he leaves and he goes to play on the boat again.*



**Figure: 16JnE, 'Help! Help! Help!'**(Ian's photos of the fence and the sand pile)

(16<sup>th</sup> June, 'Help! Help! Help!' Field notes)

## **§27. Event 'Kicking the fence', video data**



*I was with Arthur under the tree. Arthur was showing me how he plays with a conker. Having finished, he is about to get down from the tree when we notice that Tommy, a child who has recently joined this group, is kicking the door of the fence and pushing it at the same time with his hands. (00:41) (background of the video) 'Are you ok Tommy?' I ask him while Arthur is looking at him. He does not answer, shaking the fence with his hands. 'What?'" I ask him again 'You can move from there!' I tell him, having in my mind the event with Ian. Tommy does not answer me and he keeps shaking and kicking the door. He turns using his back to try to pull it down. I move closer. 'Do you want to go in?' I ask him (MOVO4697- 24<sup>th</sup> June)*



**Figure 25JnE: 'kicking the fence'(Video still, 1:01) / The Connected Four (researcher's picture)**

*Arthur comes over as well. He looks through the fence: 'Look at that!' Arthur says. 'What?' I ask him. 'Over there!' 'You mean the red big toy?' I say. 'Yeah...that one!' 'Can you open the door? I want to have a look in there!' Tommy stops kicking the door and he looks at me as well. I don't know what to tell them. 'Can you open the door?' Arthur asks me again. 'I don't think it is permitted to go in there!' I tell him. 'Can we have a look!?' Arthur repeats shaking the door with his hands 'Can we have a look?' he says again. 'Maybe we should ask somebody else to tell us if they can show us!' I say to him. 'Ok lets go to ask!' Arthur says getting on his bike. 'Follow me!' he tells me 'Yeah I am following you!' I say to him.*

*(24<sup>th</sup> June 'kicking the fence' MOVO4700, video data)*

## **§28. Event 'the wooden house' video data**

*The music in the background is coming closer getting louder. Jennifer comes to join us 'Hello!' I tell her. The music has finished 'What is it here?' I ask her 'A house!' the music starts again 'A house?' 'It is not done yet!' 'It is not done yet! Wow! You know Cindy said there is a monster here!' Jennifer looks around 'Cindy!' I say. The music is coming closer. 'What's that noise?' Jennifer asks me 'I don't know!' the music is getting louder and louder. A yellow rabbit soft toy appears in front of us singing. Alison has found a toy in the babies' room and she brought it in the house. She is about to place it into the house but seeing the researcher she is surprised and she takes some steps back. Finally she places it*



on the ground. Ian appears in the entrance. He keeps a cowslip in his hand 'Do you know what is that place?' 'Yeah!' 'What is that place?' (The music has finished) 'Spider!!!' he says to me 'Spider?' 'Is it a spider?' 'Yeah!' where is it?' 'It is gone' Jennifer says 'It is gone?' 'Look' Jennifer says and she is looking for spiders on the roof' Where did you find the spider?' 'There' Cindy says 'Do you want to show me?' 'Yeah' 'Where?' 'There!' 'Spider! Spider!' Ian says while Jennifer is looking for spiders on the roof of the house then she pretends that she is scared and she leaves 'I come....me !' Ian says and he goes out of the house.

(30<sup>th</sup> June, 'The wooden house' MOVO4778-9)

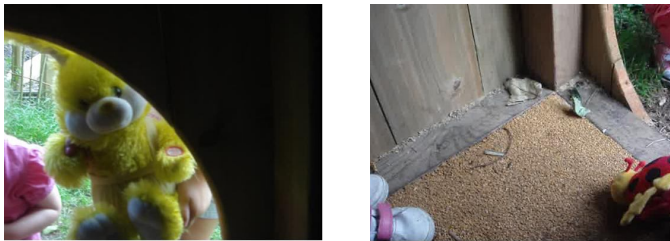


Figure 30JnE 'The wooden house', 1. 'the music rabbit' (00:48 video still) 2. 'the spider web' (video still)

**§29. Practitioners Caroline comments:** *She is thinking the dog's house falls from up, down. Because it was not there in beginning....That's right. And I just think it's the shape. I am convinced it has got something to do with the shape and as you said, it just fell. Because if you drop something, it breaks, doesn't it and it's not the same, and that's not symmetrical, it's slanted. It's interesting though whether it has got a tree out in the garden, do you know what I mean, a tree house? Because some people build houses in trees and they call them tree houses. And children play in them. So it would be interesting to see if she has ever had to climb up and go into a tree house. She thinks it has fallen out of a tree. I think she has been in a tree house or something*

*Yeah, we had both of them yesterday. They were both of the dogs out and they says 'Come with me' and I says 'Why, where are we going?' We went to the dog house, so I followed them to the dog house. When I got there, they went 'There's a MONSTER in here' and it's still the same. And I said, 'What's the matter with the monster?' And they went 'it's SCARY!' And I said 'Boo' and then both of them, so it's still there, Jennifer and Cindy, yeah yesterday...And I said 'Should we bring him some tea and biscuits?' And so I went to the home corner and I got a tray and I put some biscuits, some pretend biscuits and drinks and things like that and I said, You should have a party with the monsters and they said*

*'No, it's scary'. So, it's still there. I went in, but I couldn't see anything. There was a few cobwebs but I think that might have been it.(Practitioner Caroline)*

### **§30. Event 'The roof and the tree', Field Notes**

*Jennifer is riding her scooter. She passes in front of me saying 'Angeliki, Angeliki!!' 'Jennifer!! Bye Bye!!' (I though she wanted to show me how quick she was riding her scooter as she had recently developed that competence). She stopped, she takes the bicycle 'Angeliki, Angeliki!!' and she waved at me to follow her 'Come! Come!'. I follow her. She stops close to the tree 'Look!' she tells me showing me the roof 'There is a ball up there!' 'Where?' 'There on the roof!' 'I can't see it!'. I tell her. She raises up her hands wanting me to pick her up.. 'Look theere, the black ball!' We are looking trying to see the ball. She gets down and she goes to the other part of the fence steps on a chair and tries to see on the top of the roof. 'Over there!! Can you see it?' 'Mhmhm not really!' 'I want to go up there!' 'Up there? What are you going to do up there?' 'To see how it is!' 'Hhmmm I am not sure if we can do that!'. She grasps the digital blue camera from my hands. She gets down looking at the roof. She takes a picture. Then she goes and sits on the bike again. She rides around. She stops and she looks at the tree. She takes some pictures. It is almost 11:45 and Jennifer gets off the bike and waves for to me to follow her. 'Look the tree!!!!... put me on the tree' she tells me. I keep her in my arms. I place her on the tree. She looks at the roof. Then she looks at the garden "The boat...I can see the boat from here!!" She says 'Hahhahhahaha'she laughs appearing fascinated 'Wow!' she looks around. 'Jennifer, come in' the practitioner says 'No' Jennifer whispers. And only I can hear that. 'I can see your eyes from here', she tells me, 'They are brown'. 'We have the same colour eyes, your eyes are brown as well', 'Your eyes are brown! Hahahaah like mine' she told me 'I can see that your eyes are brown!'. I said 'Oh! hahahhahahah ....Look, it's different here!' it is quite.... Most of the children are going inside. Jennifer looks around. 'Jennifer, Jennifer!' the practitioner asks her to come in. I place her on the ground 'Noooo' she tells me 'Let me use my hands' she says and she tries to climb with her hands refusing to get down. I help her to hold the tree trunk. I place her on the tree. She stretches her hands and she picks a leaf. She places it on my nose. 'Fououuuou' she says and the leaf falls down, then she picks another one and she tries to put it on her nose. I place her on the ground, the leaf falls down. 'Where is it?' I ask 'Over there' she tells me, I pick up the leaf. However this time the practitioner comes over and takes her inside. 'Come come Jennifer everybody is in now'.*

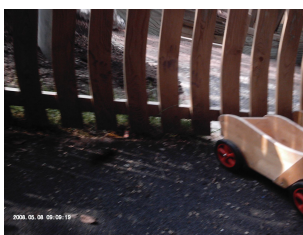
(10<sup>th</sup> April 'The roof and the tree', Field Notes)

**§31. Practitioner's comments:** *But she does spend a lot of time there in that tree, she still does today. She likes to climb on that and run round it, at the wheelie round there and everything she has. Yes, so it is a big thing in the garden, you know, isn't it?(seeing the picture of the tree).... The tree, because the children have dug around it. We have done all sorts of things round that tree, so it's probably why it's significant to her. It's because she is higher, isn't it? Yeah, she said that to me, because I catches her the other day. She is just leaning in the tree, she has climbed up and she is looking down. I say 'Are you alright up there?' And she says 'Yeah, I am looking at the view' (Laughs) Yeah, definitely. And she is quite happy, just looking around in the tree(practitioner Caroline interview).*

### **§32. Event 'the boat', Field Notes**

*Ian is looking outside and he says to me 'Look.... Boat'. 'Yeah a boat!!' I answer him. He moves towards the boat showing me the camera 'picture'. 'Do you want to take a picture of the boat?' 'Yeah' he moves closer. He goes close to the fence. We look through the fence. 'Do you like the boat' 'Yeah' and he is laughs 'Are you looking forward to playing there!!?' 'Yeah' I give him the camera and he places it between the gaps of the fence. He is about to take picture when... 'Ian, snack time.... come in!' the practitioner tells him very upset. Both of us are almost scared (my heart was beating quickly-present moment) as we were really enjoying the moment. We go directly in while Ian turns and takes a picture . Ian goes to the practitioner and I sit at a table. He picks up a chair and he tries to put it on the table. He looks at me, his face is sad. 'We can take a picture of the boat later on if you want!' I tell him....'Yeah' he says and he turns his body to start eating.....*

(8<sup>th</sup> May 'The boat' Field Notes)



**Figure 8ME: 'the fence' (Ian's picture)**

### **§33. Telephone Discussion**

*It was 10:50 I was sitting on the sofa waiting for children to finished with their snack Ian was sitting on the floor and he was playing with the telephone. He is speaking on the phone. Suddenly he is coming and he is giving to me the earpiece.*

*'for you!' he is telling me*

*'Really?! Hello!!! Hey Tim !!( my teacher is...) I am fine thank you. Yeahhhh I am here with Ian. I think that today spend really good time playing on the table outside with the*

*playdough and the pasta....yeahhhh but....I think that is better to ask him, if he really enjoys!!'*

*I am giving to him the earpiece*

*'yeah.....yeah....ohhhhhh yeahhhhhh.....hihihihi(he is laughing) and he is moving his head. And the boat!.....'(he is telling) then he is giving to me the earpiece.*

*'yes Tim, I am here, yeah he took also a picture of the boat. The builder was also there doing some work. Hmhmhmh....I don't know let me asked him.....Ian my teacher is asking me if you would like to go and play with the boat?' 'yeah....(and he is show me the boat).... There'*

*'Yeah....we can not go yet as it is not ready. Thank you Tim!! Bye for me....'(Ian my teacher wanted to tell you goodbye)*

*I am giving the earpiece to him*

*'Hello!! Yeahhh.....bye bye!' and he hung up the telephone.*

*'Drink drink drink' Ian has his hand on the telephone and at the same time is doing the sound. However the conversation is ending here when practitioner is asking us to go out. Ian is going and take the bicycle the wooden one.*

*(13<sup>th</sup> of May 'telephone discussion' Field notes)*

## **Appendix C**

### **Documentation related to Chapter 5**

§1. For example, it has been found that on one occasion a practitioner expressed doubt as to what extent I can communicate with a child that is not speaking yet. Wanting to triangulate my findings from Allan's observation I asked practitioner Mia if she has observed the same thing:

*'I think Allan likes playing with dinosaurs a lot. Every time I ask him to play with the dinosaurs he is happy to do that, have you noticed something similar?'*

*'How do you know that?'*

*'He showed me!!'*

*'He does not speak! How can you communicate with him?'*

*'But he saw my gestures! I asked him 'Hey! Allan, I can see you have got your dinosaur in your hands, do you like that game?', 'Oh!!! yeah!!!'*

*Blablalalallallalalalal' Allan told me nodded his head. 'Do you want to play together?' I asked him. He grasped my hands and we went over to the carpet together to play, over there you saw us!'*

*'Aaaah ok....' The practitioner says and she leaves.*

(5<sup>th</sup> March, field notes)

Flewitt (2005b: 210) conducted research in an English early years' setting, she found that what parents at home understand as 'good talkers', the staff considered as children with no communicative competence and with a tendency for 'speech delay'. Allan has been characterised in that way by the practitioners in this specific English setting. However, during the interview, his mother argued that she can communicate and understand with her child simply because they use different codes of communication (Trevarthen, 1995; Alderson et al, 2005). For instance Allan's mother explained that he uses particular words for naming things (the same feature has also been observed in the video and field notes data); 'wi wi' (for fish) 'pia' (for pizza), 'biki' (for bird), 'bip' (for digital blue camera). When I started discussing that Allan has his own way of communicating, his mother was surprised that I recognised the words that Allan was using to name things. She was convinced by the staff in the day care centre that her child had 'speech delay'. However, she explained to me that she communicated with her child by repeating the words such as 'pia', 'wi wi' and not naming them to him in the 'correct' English way such as 'pizza' or 'fish'.

Conversely, the practitioner viewing the video of Allan naming the animals in his own language said that she was not aware of that code of communication. Flewitt (2005b) argues that in the English case, despite the significant recent reforms, there is still a need in practice to recognise the child's non-verbal communication. She found in her study that children communicate differently in the preschool simply because they are still learning how to become members of the group. Here another factor is that in English case the children did not attend the setting on a daily basis. The style of communication is also interrelated with the type of activity. In adult initiated activities the child's way of communication depends on the level of control that they have within the activity (Rogoff, 2003; Flewitt, 2005b; Emilson and Folkesson, 2006). The above example, together with the findings of Flewitt (2005b) brings me on to other arguments about the danger of 'pathologising' the child's communication style that is not based on dialogue (see Chapter 2), despite the fact that in the curriculum in England (the EYFS) the child is recognised as 'skilful communicator' (Vandenbroeck 2006a, Vanderbroeck and Bouverne-De Bie, 2006; Tobin, 1995, 2005; Flewitt, 2005b).

**§2.** For example, there was a case when one child (during the time he was playing with the wooden building blocks without any recognisable reason) started throwing building blocks to other children. Initially a practitioner told him off by saying 'No throwing!' However, instead of stopping the child continues and becomes more stressed. The practitioner hugged and comforted the child by taking him in her lap, only when the child was not under control any more and the rest of us were trying to protect the children and ourselves from serious injury. This event had happened more than twice with the practitioners following the same tactic, although all of us had already experienced the event more than once.

### **§3. Marias comments**

*Maria: Put another video on, I don't like this one!*

*Angeliki: You don't like it? Do you want to tell me why exactly you don't like it? (I am surprised I can't understand her reaction)*

*Maria: I want that one with the bike!*

*Angeliki: You want that one with the bike?( I am still trying to understand ....I am surprised)*

*Maria: Yes!. I want that one with the car not this one with the owl....I don't like it!! Stop it!!! I don't like that song!! I don't like it at all!! Stop it!!! (She closes her ears)*

(19<sup>th</sup> January, 'Stop it!!! I don't like that song!!' Field notes)

#### **§4. Marias comments**

*Maria: Did I tell you the other day not to show me again such a video!!??? I hate sitting there!*

*Angeliki: Oh!! Sorry I thought you didn't like the 'owl' song!!*

*Maria: I don't like sitting there I hate it!!! I want to get up and dance like that!!*

*Ohh!! What fun!! Opa's!*

*And she gets up and starts dancing and saying 'Opa opa!'*

(23rd January 'Opa!! Opa!!' Field Notes)

**§5.** For example, during breakfast on 20<sup>th</sup> January Christos invited me to join him in circle time. Maria had not joined the group yet. She arrived when I was already sitting on the mattress singing with children. Seeing me sitting on the mattress, Maria looked to be upset. She came and sat close to me. When the practitioner started singing the 'owl' song Maria pinched my hand then she showed me to make the gestures following the practitioner's directions. At the same time she whispered:

*'You don't like that song!! Don't sing it at all!! Did you hear what I am telling you?'* (20<sup>th</sup> January 'You don't like that song' Field notes)

In addition to this, on the same day Christos (through the pictures that were taken) showed me what exactly the children can see when they are sitting on the mattress. The moment he took the picture it was not possible to ask him further questions, as it was during the time practitioner was singing with the children. Afterwards he declined to make any comment. However, Christos' indication of a line on the floor puzzled me as in fact it showed the spatial restriction that children experience sitting in the mattress area (parents and practitioners agree). This is what was visible for me from the place where the children indicated to me to sit. The line goes straight to their favourite toys (Christos has reported that: 'Look the line and our toys there!'). Simultaneously it is keeping him far away from them as practitioner is sitting on the chair right by the line trying to prevent them from leaving the mattress. The line is the same in all pictures. As it has been mentioned before, the children declined to make any clear comment about circle time but they did report to me that they took a picture of the line (20<sup>th</sup> of January, 'Look I took a picture of the line' - Christos' comments, Field notes and child's pictures). This line was depicted in many of the children's pictures. On 8<sup>th</sup> December Maria called me to sit down with her on the



mattress and talk. To my surprise Maria asked me what I can see from the mattress, while at the same time she is taking pictures:

*Maria: And now tell me something else*

*Angeliki: What?*

*Maria: Can you see this small line here down?*

*Angeliki: Yes I can see it!*

*Maria: And... I took a picture of it...look! One more now!*

*Angeliki: Nice!*

*Maria: Where is it going?*

*Angeliki: Where is it going? I wonder*

*Maria: Over there! (she shows me the toys opposite and she takes a picture)*

*Angeliki: But why did you show me this line? Is this line important?*

*Maria: Yes it is important that line*

*And she takes two more pictures*

*Maria: And tell me what can you see now?*

*Angeliki: I can see the grocery shop, the kitchen, the fridge, the bike!*

*Maria: And you should bring your slippers!*

(8DG 'You should bring your slippers' Field notes)

It is clear that the camera is a means through which children can express their feelings. If Christos had not have invited me to sit with them on the mattress, I would never have been able to understand the meaning of the pictures with the lines. Additionally, Maria's comments (8<sup>th</sup> December) show how she needs to know that I can understand what they can see when they are sitting on the mattress. (Maria has previously asked me to guarantee about the informed consent. When Maria invited me her sentence was 'Come here to speak about our signatures'). In the above events it is clear how the camera is becoming an important tool to be integrated in the analysis of the documentation and how the children do not always want to speak due to the sensitivity of the theme (the two children here interrogate indirectly the routine of the 'Circle time'). Maria and Christos do not want to say much at this time but they placed me in their shoes to show indirectly what they experience.

§ 6. For instance, in one case Panayiotis photographed a friend when she is sitting on the top of the table. His mother saw the picture and wondered whether Panayiotis is reporting the moment of infraction of the rule or his agreement with what his friend has done. In the

same way the Panayiotis in the video 23<sup>rd</sup> January ‘Pulling the chair down’ MOVO 6458 filmed his friend who with his bike was pulling down the chair that a practitioner had sat in previously during circle time, waiting for the practitioner to come back and continue the activity

In the pictures Panayotis took, he had depicted the whole event, how the practitioner asked Christos to leave the bike and sit down on the mattress and wait for her, until the time he is pulling down the chair that the practitioner was sitting on previously and how the other children were tried to place it as before to avoid the practitioner’s questions. This is Panayiotis’ depiction of the event through the camera supporting me in the video filming process. Panayiotis and Christos did not want to make any comment. But the question is “what the child wanted to depict through the pictures? Was it his agreement with what Christos is doing or to report the infraction? We do not really know but when the practitioner asked who did that Panayiotis did not say anything to her. Additionally, the fact that after the event he took one more picture of the chair means that ‘the chair’ for him and Christos has a constructed meaning - maybe to with ‘circle time’ or the practitioner’s position. Further, as with Panayiotis’ case, Christos used the camera as a tool to report strategies of withdrawal from an activity (circle time) on many occasions. For example, in one episode on the 29<sup>th</sup> January Christos depicted in his pictures some of the strategies he uses during the circle time to withdraw. For instance, when the practitioner went with the other children to the toilet Christos took the following pictures. After taking the pictures he asked me to video film him jumping on the mattress (which is not permitted).



**Figure 29JG ‘circle time’ Christos’ pictures of the tools he use to withdraw from the activity**

In the first picture is the mattress where the circle time is taking place. There are also Christos’ and Aspasia’s shoes which they were trying to play with during circle time. In the second picture there is the area where he found the dog that along with Aspasia he played with during the circle time while the third picture is the dog.

§ 7. For instance in one case recorded in 8DGMOVO5974-76 during circle time, practitioner Anastasia had decided to talk to the children about the story of the birth of

Jesus. However, before she started reading the story the children had already began a discussion about their shoes, while at the same time they were trying to take their shoes off. Although Maria had asked to take their shoes off the practitioner said to her “No” strictly, using as an excuse that they are going to fall down. The children ignored the practitioner’s effort to read the story while all the time another child Aspasia was sitting on the top of the turtle pillow (a place where the practitioner had clarified the previous day that someone can go if does not want to participate in the circle time as long as they are silent). Aspasia was silent all the time and when practitioner invited her to move closer Aspasia just looked at her without answering or moving. The practitioner seeing children’s the ignorance of her story and pre-occupation with their shoes started to verbally assault the children accusing them of consumerism:

*(3:11) The practitioner stood up in front of the children and from a distance said: ‘So!!!Your shoes are more important than what I am telling you!!?!?!?’*

*‘Yessssssssss!!!!’ (Eleni) ‘Yessssssssssssssssssssssssssssssssssss!’ Aspasia says as well (all this time she was silent) ‘Ok Eleni!!!’ the practitioner says.*

*Maria stands up and goes and sits closer to Aspasia and Dafni who are on the turtle (3:27). She giggles. The three girls started chatting (it is not understandable what they are talking about but they show to each other their clothes)*

*‘The Christmas has finished for today ....lets be occuppied with our shoes!!!!’ (3:42) the practitioner tells them (very ironically) while Christos goes in front of the three girls without his shoes on and says to them ‘We take them off as well....we take them off!!!’ And he is goes back to Anastasios.*

*(8<sup>th</sup> December ‘Let’s be occuppied with our shoes!!!!’ MOVO5974-76 video)*

At the time and during the interview the practitioner explained the children’s attitude as due to a ‘consumerist’ life style. She does not consider the issues related to the here and now situation. Since the time children had sat down on the mattress they were busy with their shoes. The practitioner ignored two factors: firstly, the children were already occupied with their own activity –taking their shoes on and off. She did not consider her role as a disturbance. She decided to speak about the story of the Jesus without considering children’s interest at that moment, neither how important it can be for children to learn how to take their shoes on and off for their later life related with independence. She even rejects Marias’ proposal to take off their shoes. The second concern is that with her comments she tried to make children to feel guilty for their preferences and being

responsible for being interested in the shoes and socks. Here there is a paradox. As part of their routines the children have to bring slippers from home in order to wear during the time they are in the day care centre. On this day the practitioner did not give the children their slippers. However, in the video (above) the children started remove their shoes. In addition to the routine of changing shoes in the day care centre is the fact that it has been observed that children ignored the practitioner when she was calling them to change their shoes and put on their slippers (Field notes observation 24N). Practitioner Anastasia mentions that there is confusion due to the lack of curriculum and there is no agreement between all members of the staff (practitioner Anastasia comments on the event at the 8<sup>th</sup> of December).

The video and what is reported by the practitioner shows that there is a misunderstanding. Children and parents on the other hand, report the event in a different way. The three parents of Christos, Marias and Panayiotis have reported that on the same day a different story at home had been reported about their shoes. Maria's pictures and comments, together with Panayiotis' pictures shows that the children did not want to sit down on the mattress and listening to the story at that specific moment. The two children declined to watch the video of the circle time but they spoke using the camera to say what they wanted (they took pictures of the turtle pillow and their shoes). For Maria the event with the shoes is correlated with the morning event, with the fact that her mother is going to come to pick her up soon and with the fact that sometimes they are forced to take their shoes off during the time they are in the day care centre. The practitioner confirmed that there are disagreements between the staff about whether or not the children should wear slippers or not. Maria, talking with me about the shoes and taking pictures at the same time, is referring to the above issues showing in this way the confusion that there is around the rules that should be followed in the day care centre. However, the practitioners misunderstanding is becoming clear in the 11DG MOVO6008 video event when Maria, Aspasia and Dafni are watching the nativity that the practitioner is preparing; in this context they , are keen to have a story about Jesus' life. Maria tells the story of the Jesus in front of the camera for 9 minutes, a time that is correlated with the average length of time they spend in circle time and she takes pictures of the book about the Christmas story.

### **§8 Event 'Punch'**

*Dafni, Christos and Maria go straightaway to grocery shop. Maria picks up some fruit and starts throwing it. Christos does the same and saying 'Punch!' (Μπουνιά!) then all together they start throwing fruits at the door saying 'Μπουνιά'=punch!! 'Kids!!! What is*

*that? Don't we say we never thrown toys? Don't we?" The practitioner says. (1DG 'Punch!'Field notes)*

The event finished with practitioner Anastasia and Christos having a strong disagreement. The child shows his feeling by inviting the rest of the children under the table and closing the door-chair and refusing to talk to the practitioner any more. When they came out from under the table Christos came and asked for the digital camera. He took two pictures of the chair (which they closed when they went under the table). Then, he walked around. He stopped and took pictures of the door and the last toy he threw before going under the table (1DG 'Punch!'Field notes))



**Figure 1DG 'Punch' Christos photos captured the event under the table**

§9 I was invited by the children to capture the event with her camera. In addition to this the door and his coat had been depicted many times in his pictures while his comments were as follows:

*'I don't like the door, only the colour I like it...'*

*'Look I took a picture of the wall....and my coat!'*

*'Why did you take those pictures?'*

*'Because, I want to go out there!'* (And he points to the entrance of the day care centre)

(3<sup>rd</sup> April Field notes)



**Figure 3AG 'Christos' pictures of the wall, his coat and the door of the classroom'**

It seems that for Christos the door, the coat and the wall are obstacles that prevent him from going out of the day care centre. The door in their classroom was always closed with a chain at a height children could not reach. His mother mentions that most probably the

reason why the door is locked in this way is because Christos knows that she was working next door and he was leaving the room often refusing to go back again. (Observations also demonstrate that in the beginning of the research visits Christos was always leaving the room). Consequently, for Christos the door is often in his attention and in many cases he is trying to find the way to open it as he has a plan on his mind. In one case he invited the researcher to help him in this process. While on 4<sup>th</sup> March going to the classroom after snack he tells me:

*When we arrived at the first floor Christos is telling me seriously*

*-I will ruin the school*

*- You will ruin it?*

*- I will take my dad's electrical rig and I will drop everything down...It is bad...*

(4MG field notes)

From the above events it becomes clear that Christos for his own reasons does not enjoy his time in the day care centre, despite the fact that his mother is working there. Practitioner after having reviewing the video data she admits that the children's attitude is a matter of her way of working.

**Practitioner's comments:** *'And Christos here is trying to do that in practice ....however I can see that even Panayiotis is participating....they felt that moment absolutely free to do whatever they want....because I will never let them to throw away things...they releave themselves here...xaxaxxaxxxaxa....and Panayiotis here was scared when (the pillow) touches the garlands...and of course before he left he threw the last (item). It is the 'don't and don't'....as long as I am not there they are free to do whatever they want' (Practitioner Vera).*

*'It is obvious I stress them up a lot and I am forcing them to do it! They are feeling bored ....sometimes we are following our programme and we are not listening to what they are saying to us....and this is always happening ...the videos are helping me a lot on that....but do you know something? I have never imagined before that... because I have been tough in this way and I saw it happen in this way from other colleagues'. (Practitioner Vera)*

She also admits that she stresses the children during the programme and actually the videos are helping her to realise that. She thought that this was a usual way of working due to what she has been experienced and her studies. Maria, as with Christos, reported many times in front of the practitioners that she intended not to come to this school again. In one

video playing with the plasticine she repeats again her decision, Anastasios agrees with her and he tells her that he is going to do the same:

***‘I will not come here never again!!!’, video data***

*-.....My star.....I will take everything at home...everything....and I will not come here never again!!!*

*- I will never come as well!!*

*Anastasios said to her from the other side of the table*

*- Never, neither will I!!! Maria answers him*

*(1<sup>st</sup> December, ‘I will not come here never again!!!’ MOVO5861, video data)*

While in another event standing up watching the children tidying up the foyer she says, frustrated:

*- I am not doing anything important here as I am doing at home!! Ouf!!!*

*(19<sup>th</sup> January, Field notes)*

**§ 10** For instance, in one event that happens on 15<sup>th</sup> December, the children are sitting on the table waiting for practitioner to hand out the material for the crafts. They started playing a game related with the shoes that are smelling and should be changed. The whole group is involved laughing and giggling while the practitioner interrupts them keeping order to keep going with the crafting:

*-Shoush!!! I am sorry but I am in a hurry because we have to go to the ground floor to make the rehearsal ... could you help me in something that I need you to? Aspasia could you help me? Aspasia help me first in something I need you and then you can teach this song to your friend. I am in a hurry now!!*

*(15<sup>th</sup> December ‘Your shoes are smelling, change them’ MOVO6027 video data)*

The child initiated activity is interrupted. At particular moments the children have to do particular things. What is really problematic in this case is the fact that the song about the shoes is about smelling, the practitioner during their discussion encouraged the children to smell the weather cones before started doing the crafts. Although the practitioner is aware of what the children are doing and despite the fact that she is in a hurry, she stopped

children's play in the name of her own programme. Here the practitioner misunderstood and ignores completely child initiated activity. On the same day Christos and Panayiotis invited me to play with them the song taking pictures of their shoes and legs. However, once more the game was disturbed by snack time. Christos found the game fun mentioning that to me. The above game has never become part of the programme although children are particularly keen on themes related with shoes and clothes (parents confirm). Thus for the Greek practitioners the meaning of participation is exclusively based on the child's obligation to follow adult directions in completely adult directed activities.